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# **A STUDY IN TOLERANCE**

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# **A STUDY IN TOLERANCE**

**AS PRACTICED BY MUHAMMAD  
AND HIS IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS**

**BY**

**ADOLPH L. WISMAR, PH.D.**



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**TO MY DEAR FRIEND**  
**MR. FREDERICK W. OVERBECK**





A STUDY IN TOLERANCE  
AS PRACTICED BY MUḤAMMAD AND HIS  
IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of  
Philosophy, Columbia University.

ADOLPH L. WISMAR.

Humani iuris et naturalis potestatis est unicuique,  
quod putaverit, colere, nec alii obest aut prodest alterius  
religio. Sed nec religionis est cogere religionem, quae  
sponte suscipi debeat, non vi; cum et hostiae ab animo  
libenti expostulentur. Tertullian, *ad Scapulam*, II.



## FOREWORD

MOHAMMEDANISM must always command the interest of men who think and read about the history of religion. Its story has been unique. It has gone into so many countries and has influenced so many civilizations that every phase of its early development is worth study and careful research. Upon the one hand, it has been pronounced tolerant and unoffending. On the other, it is accused of being impassioned and over enthusiastic. Dr. Wismar has studied the Koran and the early authorities in order to find out in what ure the word "tolerant" can be applied to Mohammed and to his immediate successors. It is a study that I commend heartily to the reader and I hope that Dr. Wismar will pursue still further this investigation, in order to give us a true picture of the Mohammedanism that made its way from Arabia into Africa, into Asia, and into parts of Europe.

RICHARD GOTTHEIL



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## INTRODUCTION

IN dealing with religion a state best consults its own interests, as well as those of its citizens and others dwelling within its borders, by granting complete religious liberty. This means that the state realizes that freedom of worship is part and parcel of inalienable human rights. Accepting this truth and acting according to it the state consistently refuses to give preference to one religion over another. It considers all dwelling under its jurisdiction not as adherents of a certain religious cult, but merely as citizens, as individuals entitled to its protection. In other words, the state minds its own peculiar business, which is to attend to civil matters. What a man chooses to believe or not to believe is a matter between him and his Creator and does not disqualify him in any civic rights. But religious liberty becomes impossible whenever a certain religion or a certain religious denomination receives preferential treatment from a government. Under such an arrangement the established church enjoys advantages which other religions, other denominations must forego. The established church enjoys, let us say, financial support secured by the government for it through taxes levied on all that enjoy its protection. The fact that some of the tax-payers may not want the taxes so applied is not taken into account by the government. Again, the members of an established church find the attainment of political position easy, whereas the adherents of other creeds are confronted with



difficulties of all sorts when they undertake to secure a place of political preferment. Furthermore, when a congregation of one of the denominations that are not in the government's favor undertakes to erect a place of worship, it finds all manner of hindrances placed in its way by the government. In other words, one cult is made the favored cult, all others are, more or less, step-children. It is this sort of treatment of other cults by a state and under the influence of an established church that is known as tolerance. Other cults and creeds beside the favored one are allowed to exist, but always under certain restrictions. These restrictions may be of varying severity. They may readily become so severe that it is difficult to distinguish them from actual persecution. However, normally tolerance means that a state, espousing a certain religion or creed, allows those of its people who do not accept the established and favored faith to exercise the worship of their preference and conviction, but with certain restrictions and under specified embarrassments.

It is this tolerance as practiced by Islām under the prophet and the first two Caliphs that is the subject of this study. This must not be taken to mean that this tolerance was always and everywhere practiced by the Muslim state. The Islām of the Qur'ān is theocratic and the Muslim state was a theocracy from its first attainment to power. The Muslim church was the Muslim state inasmuch as it dealt with civil affairs. The affairs of the state had to be regulated and conducted according to a divine revelation. Muḥammad received his instructions from Allah. These instructions might concern prayer, or alms, or food and drink, or the relation of believer to believer, or the relation of believer to unbeliever. The

Qur'ān was the revelation of Allah covering every detail of public worship and daily conduct. Thus the best that one can expect from Muhammadanism, abiding in the ways of the prophet, when it is confronted with the necessity of dealing with people refusing to accept Allah and his messenger, is tolerance. Other religions may be permitted to exist by the side of the one favored religion within the Muslim state, but always under certain restrictions, always under prescribed disabilities.

Naturally enough, the restrictions thus placed upon adherents of other faiths would vary from time to time. Where there is, for example, but a small Jewish community, scrupulously abiding within the limits of the covenant by which it enjoys tolerance, there is little likelihood that a more rigorous interpretation of the terms of its charter will be attempted. Or again, if a ruler is of an easy-going disposition, naturally peaceful, anxious to avoid unnecessary disturbances and annoyances, the protected cults will have little cause for apprehension on the score of their guaranteed privileges. But, on the other hand, when members of the tolerated cults succeed in numbers in securing places of eminence and influence, the will of Allah is likely to be scrutinized very carefully by zealous Muslims and a more stringent exposition of the inspired regulations or a more conscientious application of the terms of the tolerated people's charter may be found. Or, granted that a ruler is scrupulously religious, deeply concerned about every jot and tittle of his moral code, possessed by a burning desire to please Allah, so that Allah may not cast him off on the day of judgment, stern measures will naturally be used towards protected and tolerated cults by such a ruler.

But tolerance was not always the rule of practice. True enough, there are not a few who would have us believe that the Muslims have been extremely tolerant, that the prophet himself laid the foundations for this laudable policy, and that he himself did not depart from this excellent standard in dealing with such as could not convince themselves of the correctness of his claims. It is considerably easier to make this contention than to substantiate it. Not only do we find considerable fluctuation as to the measure of tolerance allowed other religions, but we also find cases that wear a much more sinister aspect. This statement applies to the prophet himself. It holds good with reference to other Muslim rulers also. But such cases, after all, constitute the exceptions to the general rule of tolerance for other cults.

# A STUDY IN TOLERANCE

## CHAPTER I

### TEACHINGS OF THE QUR'AN

T. W. ARNOLD<sup>1</sup> says in his interesting and learned volume, "The Preaching of Islam," that "while the spread of this faith (Islām) over so vast a portion of the globe is due to various causes, social, political and religious: among these, one of the most powerful factors at work in the production of this stupendous result, has been the unremitted labours of the Muslim missionaries, who, with the prophet himself as their great ensample, have spent themselves for the conversion of unbelievers. The duty of missionary work is no after-thought in the history of Islam, but was enjoined on believers from the beginning, as may be judged from the following passages in the Qur'an—which are here quoted in chronological order according to their date of being delivered." He then proceeds to quote twenty-two Qur'ān passages, the purport of which is to inculcate the preaching of Islām. A few may be set down here to give a correct idea of the tenor of these passages.

"Summon thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning: dispute with them in the kindest manner" (Sūra 16, 126).

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"For this cause summon thou (them to the faith), and walk uprightly therein as thou hast been bidden, and follow not their desires: and say: In whatsoever Books God hath sent down do I believe: I am commanded to decide justly between you: God is your Lord and our Lord: we have our works and you have your works: between us and you let there be no strife: God will make us all one: and to Him shall we return" (42, 13.14).

"Say to those who have been given the Book and the ignorant, Do you accept Islam? Then, if they accept Islam, are they guided aright: but if they turn away then thy duty is only preaching: and God's eye is on His servants" (3, 19).

"Tell those who believe to pardon those who hope not for the day of God in which He purposeth to recompense men according to their deserts" (45, 13).

"Let there be no compulsion in religion" (2, 257).<sup>2</sup>

Arnold asserts that the ideal of missionary patience and forbearance as outlined in the Qur'ān was realised in history, "that these principles of missionary activity were put into practice by the exponents of Islām."<sup>3</sup> He warns his readers that he is not writing a history of Muḥammadan persecutions but of Muḥammadan missions. He asserts: "The life of the founder of Islam and the inaugurator of its propaganda may naturally be expected to exhibit to us the true character of the missionary activity of this religion. If the life of the prophet serves as the standard of conduct for the ordinary believer, it must do the same for the Muslim missionary. From the pattern, therefore, we may hope to learn something of the spirit

<sup>2</sup> Arnold, pp. 3-6.

<sup>3</sup> Arnold, p. 6.

that would animate those who sought to copy it, and of the methods they might be expected to adopt. For the missionary spirit of Islam is no after-thought in its history; it interpenetrates the religion from its very commencement.”<sup>4</sup>

Now in making an estimate of these statements it is necessary to take the following into serious consideration. Arnold indeed presents an imposing array of Qur’ān texts to substantiate his contention that Islām was from the very first a missionary religion. But even so he is giving only one side of the case. For there is another set of sayings in the Qur’ān that have something to do with the missionary program of Islām. And these other statements are as clear and as important as those which Arnold quotes. They are words of Allah, given by him to his prophet for the instruction and guidance of the faithful. They are therefore quite as binding as any statement in the vein of those urged by Arnold. Moreover, exception must be taken to the declaration that the texts presented by him are given in chronological order. As we shall see a little further on, the position which a text now occupies in the Qur’ān is not to be taken as full and final proof of its age and order of delivery. Furthermore, it is quite impossible to draw a sharp line of demarcation between Muḥammad the prophet and Muḥammad the statesman. Whatever Muḥammad says is Allah’s will to believers. It is all of a religious nature. Therefore it is futile to make this distinction, especially with reference to the matter under consideration.

Nor must we omit to recall that there are two distinct periods in the development of Muḥammad. The Muḥam-

<sup>4</sup> Arnold, p. 11.



mad of Makka is all but a failure. He succeeds in making only a small number of converts. His enemies are ready to despatch him because of his preaching. He must needs seek an asylum outside of his native city, after about twelve years of strenuous effort under adverse conditions have netted very meagre results. Hence, if one insists that these repeated statements that Muḥammad is come merely to preach are to be understood as meaning that in no case and never was the messenger of Allah to use other measures to further the cause of Allah, one can do so only by forgetting the time at which and the circumstances under which these statements were made. Furthermore, Muḥammad at Madīna in A.D. 622 or 623 has a different outlook with reference to people of other creeds than that same Muḥammad had soon thereafter. Thus, even if some of these statements belong to the early Madīna activity of the prophet, to regard them as final is unwarranted.

A few remarks are necessary with reference to the winged word of Sūra 2, 257: "Let there be no compulsion in religion." A different interpretation than that usually given these words is suggested by the Qur'ān itself. Also, the position in which these four words stand invites reflection. Immediately preceding it is the well-known "throne verse," which reads: "Allah! There is no God but he, the living, the self-existing. To him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Who may make intercession with him, unless he permits it? He knows the present and the future, and men do not attain to any knowledge of him, unless he grants it. His wide power embraces the heavens and the earth, and to have them in his care does not overwhelm him. For he is the high, the great."<sup>5</sup> Im-

<sup>5</sup> Sūra, 2, 256.

mediately after it come the following words: "The difference between truth and error has now been made clear; and whoever renounces the idol and believes in Allah has taken hold of a handle in which there is no crack; and Allah hears and knows." <sup>6</sup> The one verse exalts the supreme power of Allah, the other speaks of pagan Arabs. Pagan Arabs did not succeed in qualifying as objects of Muhammad's tolerance. Allah, the high and lofty, offered them the alternative of Allah and his messenger, or the sword. Thus the words: "There shall be no compulsion in religion," may be misplaced, if they are too mean that no one is in any way or manner to be compelled to accept Islām. Moreover, the manner in which the Qur'ān was brought into its present form readily permitted the misplacing of certain verses. At first the revelations which Allah gave Muhammad were not written down at all. Later the prophet employed, it is said, Zaid ibn Thabit as his scribe. His writing materials were ribs of palm leaves, stone tablets, bits of leather, and bones. After the death of the prophet, so tradition says, Abū Bakr, the first caliph, acting upon the suggestion of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, had Zaid ibn Thabit assemble the fragments inscribed with the revelations of Allah. It must be observed that Noeldeke utterly rejects the traditions which declare Abū Bakr to have busied himself with editing the Qur'ān. "Auf keinen Fall," he says, "fuehrt ein Weg von Omar (als Qur'ansammler) zurueck zu Abu Bakr." <sup>7</sup> He holds that 'Umar had a private copy of the Qur'ān and that upon his death it became the possession

<sup>6</sup> Sūra, 2, 257.

<sup>7</sup> Noeldeke, Theodor. *Geschichte des Qorāns*, Zweite Auflage. Leipzig, II, p. 22.

of his daughter Ḥafsa. That 'Uthmān, the third caliph did order an edition, no doubt a revision of existing copies, is beyond cavil. Now, whenever the first compilations were made, it is evident that no fixed rule was observed, but that the work was performed with considerable latitude and freedom as far as the arrangement of material is concerned. That such was the case is further evidenced by the great lack of logical sequence and cohesion in many of the Sūras. Noeldeke says: "Mit annähernder Sicherheit laesst sich literarische Einheit bei den groesseren Suren nur da verfechten, wo Gleichheit und Gleichartigkeit des Inhalts vorliegt, oder wo sich ein Refrain wie ein roter Faden durch das Ganze hindurchzieht. Viel zweifelhafter ist die Sache schon bei den Suren 17, 41, 7. Vollends bei den Suren 2, 8, 63, 4 und 9 ist jede Entscheidung ein Ding der Unmoeglichkeit."<sup>a</sup> Note that Noeldeke mentions Sūra 2 as one of those in which it is well-nigh impossible to detect any logical coherence. Hence we must not assume that, merely because a saying of the prophet occupies a certain position now, it always held that place. And if, perchance, attention is called to the fact that the words in question were used on occasion by some later Muslims in the commonly accepted sense, such employment of them does not necessarily mean correct interpretation.

However, as indicated above, the Qur'ān itself gives a valuable clue to a different construction of these words, a construction which, incidentally, admits of application to some of the other Qur'ān passages quoted by Arnold. Sūra 10, 96-100 reads as follows: "Behold, they against whom the word of thy Lord is determined (of whom Allah has

<sup>a</sup> Noeldeke, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 2, 3.

decreed that they shall not believe) will not believe, not even if all the signs (miracles) came to them. And if not (perhaps: What is that to you?)—a city that had believed would have profited by its faith. (None other) except the people of Jonah, when they believed, did we deliver from disgraceful punishment in this life and permit them to enjoy it for a season. And if thy Lord had willed it, truly, every one in the whole world would believe. Wilt THOU compel ('afa 'anta tukrihu) people to believe? No one can believe except by Allah's leave, and his wrath will be sent upon them that fail to understand." If we bear in mind that Muḥammad had considerable difficulty in gaining adherents for his claims and his cause, these words explain themselves readily. His contention was that Allah had given him the true guidance, the true religion, a sure way into paradise. But most of his hearers in Makka obstinately refused to be convinced of the excellence of his message and the correctness of his claims. In fact, the Makkans tried to kill him, the emissary of Allah, the "seal of the prophets." \* What was the trouble? Was he, Muḥammad, perhaps to blame? Or was his message after all not what he believed and taught it to be? Otherwise, why were there not more converts? The answer that Allah gives is: Muḥammad cannot control this serious and difficult matter of convincing and converting men. If Allah had decreed unbelief for certain people, Muḥammad's message would not carry conviction for them. Sūra 2, 5.6. says: "As for the unbelievers, it is all one, whether you warn them, or do not warn them. Allah has sealed their hearts and their ears, and upon their eyes is a veil." It is quite evident that these

\* Sūra, 33, 40.

and similar verses are meant as a consolation for Muḥammad. Let it be true that many do not believe. That strange fact cannot invalidate his message nor abrogate his apostleship. They who do not believe, do not believe because Allah has so willed, because Allah has not given them permission to believe. And not even the messenger of Allah can alter that. It is not within his power, not within the reach of any human power to compel men into acceptance of Allah's message.

This teaching of the Qur'ān will help us to understand Sūra 2, 257. Evidently the original purport of the words is that man cannot make submission to Allah, become a Muslim, of his own accord. Allah himself must work that submission, or it will never be made by anyone. There can hardly be any doubt then that the question at issue is not: What are the methods to be employed in the propagation of Islām? The question is rather: Who is the agent affecting conversion to Islām? Neither is the matter seeking adjustment, what treatment is to be meted out to those who obstinately and obdurately refuse submission to Allah's, that is, the prophet's message. It is not hard to conceive that Muḥammad might, on the one hand, stoutly affirm that they who reject Allah's message do this because Allah has so willed, and yet, on the other hand, vigorously insist that such victims of judicial blindness should be made to suffer in some way or another for their rebellious behavior against Allah and his chosen messenger.

As a matter of fact, the Qur'ān itself teaches very plainly that they who refuse Islām are to suffer for such refusal. In Sūra 9, 2-5 we read: "A proclamation from Allah and his messenger on the day of the great pilgrimage to the effect that Allah and his messenger are released

from obligation towards the idolaters. And if you repent, that is better for you. But if you turn your backs (on Allah's messenger), then know that you cannot baffle Allah. And proclaim to the unbelievers painful punishment. Excepted (from the treatment prescribed in the words "painful punishment") are those idolaters with whom you have a covenant and who have lived up to its terms and have helped no one against you. Fulfil unto them their covenant for the time agreed upon. Behold, Allah loves the god-fearing. But when the holy months have elapsed, slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and seize them, and besiege them, and lie in ambush for them with all the skill you can muster. But if they repent, and pray, and give alms, let them alone. Behold, Allah is forgiving, merciful." The pagan Arabs were, according to the above dictum of Allah, to be treated as follows: They who have no covenant with the Muslims are to be liable to the treatment described as painful punishment at once. Others, namely such as had a covenant with the Muslims, were to enjoy immunity during the four holy months. After that they were to be killed wherever found. They could save their lives by repentance, i.e., by declaring their submission to Allah and accepting Muḥammad as his inspired messenger. Hence, for the idolater, the pagan Arab, there was only the alternative of death or Islām. He is not to be tolerated. He must abandon his idols and accept Islām, or die. That is the final injunction of Allah with reference to idolaters. If the pagan sees the light under such painful circumstances, if he prefers Islām to death, the truth still holds that Muḥammad has not achieved such conversion. The credit for the conversion goes to Allah, and to him alone.

The same Sūra provides some very pointed and very clear regulations with reference to the treatment of Christians and Jews. Sūra 9, 29-33 proposes the following orders to the obedience of devout Muslims: "Wage war against those to whom the Book has been given, who do not believe in Allah and in the last day, and do not prohibit what Allah and his messenger have prohibited, and do not profess the true religion, until they pay jizya<sup>10</sup> with their own hands and are made vile. And the Jews say, 'Ezra is the son of Allah,' while the Christians say, 'The Messiah is the Son of Allah.' That is what they say. Their speech resembles that of the unbelievers of old. May Allah curse them! How senseless they are! They take their rabbis and their monks and the Messiah, the son of Mary, as lords beside Allah, although they were commanded to serve only one God. There is no God but he. Praise be to him to the exclusion of that which they put on a level with him. They want to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths. But Allah will assuredly bring his light to perfection, that he may make it victorious over every other religion, even though they who give Allah associates loathe it." It is evident from this statement of Muḥammad that they who have the Book, the Scriptures, i.e., Jews and Christians, are to be brought to terms. The Muslims are to make war upon them, until they pay jizya and are humbled to the dust. According to Muḥammad, the Christian worship of Jesus amounted to giving Allah an associate. As for the Jews, it is rather strange that he charges them with believing that Ezra is the son of Allah. Perhaps he had heard the Jews make much of Ezra as the restorer of their law, and as he mis-

<sup>10</sup> Capitation tax.

understood so many things, so he also misunderstood the importance they attached to Ezra and his reformation. At any rate, he was annoyed at the regard in which Christians and Jews held their teachers. But the gist of the accusation against them is that they give Allah associates, that they put others on the same level with Allah. Consistency would have required, one should think, that they were candidates for the same treatment accorded to pagans "who took other lords beside Allah," because, according to Muḥammad's judgment, they were in like condemnation. They were polytheists according to his verdict and should be dealt with as such.

But Muḥammad did not treat them as polytheists. He had all along acknowledged the divine authority of both the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Both prophesied of him, he claimed. And both Jews and Christians were expected to know that it was even as the messenger of Allah said. At any rate, they were "people of the Book," people whom Allah, Muḥammad's God, had previously visited with a revelation of his will, and such a revelation as bore witness unto Muḥammad. Now these considerations conditioned his treatment of Jews and Christians. Although they are guilty in his judgment of giving Allah associates, yet, because God has previously favored them with a divine revelation which, as he is confident, speaks of his coming and endorses his mission, they are not to be compelled to abandon their religion. But they must be humbled. They must, if they refuse the invitation to embrace Islām, be defeated and pay the capitation tax. Sūra 9, 38.39 sternly rebukes the remissness of the Muslims in putting the directions touching war against the people of the Book into practice with becoming zeal and vigor. For there



Allah's mouthpiece says: "O believers, what ailed you, when you were told, 'Rush forth in the way of Allah,' that you were crushed to the earth? Do you prefer the life of this present world to that which is to come? And what is the enjoyment of the life of this world compared to the life of that which is to come except a trifle? If you go not forth he will punish you severely, and put another people in your place. And you cannot hurt him, for he is almighty." Verse 41 of the same Sūra urges complete devotion to the "way of the Lord," i.e., to making war upon non-Muslims and bring them to submission. It reads: "Go forth, light and heavy, and struggle with your possessions and your lives in the way of the Lord. That is better for you." Sūra 2, 186-188; 2, 212; 4, 76-79, 91, 105; 8, 60-62 are in the same vein. Thus the statements against idolaters, Jews, and Christians are not merely speculative and academic. They are to be carried out, and that vigorously, strenuously. They are to be put into practice because they are a part of Allah's will. To walk in this way of the Lord may be an expensive, difficult, and perilous business, requiring great sacrifices of labor, money, and life. No matter. Allah wills it so. And who will be lacking in eagerness to comply with Allah's will, when he reflects that a superabundant reward awaits the faithful and self-sacrificing Muslim in the great beyond: Gardens traversed by brooks, fresh fruit in perennial supply, and clean spouses, Sūra 2, 23, and *passim*. Now all these instructions and directions with reference to the treatment of idolaters and people of the Book plainly belong to the missionary program of Islām and any presentation of the missionary teachings of the Qur'ān should give room to the thoughts contained in the Qur'ān verses quoted and enumerated.

It is evident, therefore, that the earlier conciliatory attitude towards Jews and Christians is abandoned by the prophet in Sūra 9, 29–35. The best authorities hold that these verses were given out soon after the expedition to Tabuk, that is, 631. "These verses, concerned entirely with submission of Christian and Jewish communities, may be fairly taken as the final and deliberate opinion as to the future relation of Islām to these creeds and people," says Sell.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, war against other creeds has the sanction of religion placed on it in Islām. Not only pagans are to be attacked for no other reason than that they are pagans and not Muslims, but Christians and Jews also are to be brought, if possible, to a better mind by the application of force. They need not be the aggressors against Muslims. The mere fact that they do not acknowledge Allah and his messenger is sufficient warrant for an attack. If they refuse the offer of Islām, they must be humbled. It is certainly difficult to see that the "holy war, in the sense taught by the unanimous voice of the doctors of Islām is wholly unauthorized by the Qur'ān."<sup>12</sup> Evidently the Qur'ān supplies all the materials needed for such a doctrine.

Before concluding this section another phase of this matter must receive attention. It has been asserted freely and frequently and is still believed by many that the Qur'ān confines its outlook to Arabia exclusively. We are told that whatever it has to say in criticism of other faiths limits itself to adherents of other religions found in Arabia. For this reason the procedure it prescribes against

<sup>11</sup> Sell, E. *Life of Muḥammad*. London, The Christian Literature Society for India, 1913, p. 213.

<sup>12</sup> Arnold, J. W. *The Preaching of Islam*. Westminster, Arnold Constable & Co., 1896.

non-Muslims exhausts itself upon non-Muslims dwelling in the Arabian peninsula. Muḥammad, it is claimed, conceived of himself simply and solely as the prophet of the Arabs. He himself had no vision of an Islām that aspired to the dignity of a world-religion. Therefore, whatever later Islām may have believed and practiced in this regard is not chargeable to the Qur'ān, is not to be laid at Muḥammad's door. Thus Muir contends that the notion that "the heritage of Islam is the world is an afterthought."<sup>13</sup> Caetani shares this view. Or rather, he contracts the outlook of the Qur'ān still more. Muḥammad, he maintains, did not look beyond Arabia, in fact, he confined his endeavors and ambitions to a very small portion of the peninsula. Had he aspired to greater things, he would have proceeded in a much more aggressive manner, once he had come to power. He holds that so pretentious a program as "the world for Islām" would have been discussed in detail in the Qur'ān, and the treatment of peoples refusing Islām would have been specified with detailed accuracy. After the seizure of Makka, Muḥammad's policy was pacific and conciliatory. Barring a few insignificant exceptions, Muḥammad's army was inactive. In the Qur'ān we do not find explicit indications about a mission to humanity or about world conquest. The principal allusion to the treatment of Jews, Christians, and the pagan tribes that had as yet not accepted the new order, is found in one of the last, if not the very last important revelation (Sūra 9). But such allusions are brief and incomplete.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Muir, Sir Wm. *The Caliphate*. London, The Religious Tract Society, 1891.

<sup>14</sup> Caetani, Leone. *Principe de Teano. Annali dell' Islam*. Milano, Ulrico Hoepli, Vol. V, pp. 323-4.

But over against that view we urge the following considerations. There is no doubt that at the beginning of his career Muḥammad, as is natural, confined himself in his missionary efforts to his immediate environment. Sūra 26, 14 reflects this early state of affairs: "Warn thy near kindred." But after a short time we find this narrow horizon has widened considerably. In Sūra 6, 92 Muḥammad says: "This book which we have sent down is blessed, corroborating that which was revealed previously, and that thou mayest warn the mother of cities (Makka), and those that live round about her." But at the same time there are indications even in the earlier Sūras that Muḥammad soon began to take a very general view of his mission. In fact, no less an authority than Goldziher asserts that from the very beginning Muḥammad's gaze was fixed on a considerably wider field than Makka, although his limited knowledge of geography would not permit him to conceive of the outlines of a world religion.<sup>15</sup> Muḥammad's familiarity with geography may or may not have been very intimate. Certain it is that there can be hardly any mistaking the drift of many a Qur'ān statement that points to ambitions of much greater extent than merely a limited section of the Arabian peninsula. Sūra 21, 107 we read: "We sent thee only as a mercy (out of pity) for the whole world, lil-ālamīna. The Qur'ān is repeatedly asserted to be a message for the whole world, Sūra 38, 87; 68, 52; 81, 27—see also 12, 104; 36, 67 and 70; 25, 1; 61, 9. In addition, Allah is over and over again called the "lord of the world," Sūra 1, 1 and passim. To Allah belong heaven and earth, Sūra 2, 256. Sūra 30, 21 says: "And to our signs be-

<sup>15</sup> Goldziher, Ignaz. *Vorlesungen über den Islam*. Heidelberg, 1910, pp. 25, 26.

long the creation of heaven and earth and the differences of languages and colors (of human beings). Behold, these are truly signs for the world," *lil-ālamīna*. The "world" of the Qur'ān is most assuredly not a small fragment of the Arabian peninsula, but is the world, is humanity in its entirety. Furthermore, there is the significant statement of Sūra 34, 27, which reads: "And we sent you as a bringer of good news and warner to all mankind," *kāffatan lil-nāsi*. And Sūra 33, 40 informs us: "Muḥammad is not the father of one of your men, but the messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets," that is, the last of the prophets, bringing God's ultimate and final revelation, completing whatever might have been lacking in divine revelations vouchsafed before his coming. And when Muḥammad had attained to power this conviction about the universality of Islām did not remain a mere theory. In the words of Goldziher: "Die Verbindungen, die er gegen Ende seiner Laufbahn mit auswaertigen Maechten anknuepfen will, sowie die durch ihn angeordneten Unternehmungen zeigen sein Streben ueber die Kreise des Arabismus hinaus. Seine Ziele erstrecken sich, nach einer Bemerkung Noeldekes, auf Gebiete, in denen er sicher war, den Romaeern als Feinden zu begegnen; der letzte der Zuege, den er seinen Kriegern anbefahl, war ein Einbruch in das byzantinische Reich. Und die gleich nach seinem Tode unternommenen grossen Eroberungen, vollfuehrt von den besten Kennern seiner Absichten, sind sicherlich der beste Kommentar seines eigenen Willens." The opinion of another close student of Muḥammad is also worthy of note. Tor Andrae says: "Als letztes Ergebnis der Entwicklung, zu der das prophetische Selbstbewusstsein Muhammads unter dem Einfluss seiner grossartigen

Erfolge gelangt ist, finden wir die Ueberzeugung, dass seine Sendung der ganzen Welt gelte, dass seine Religion dazu bestimmt sei, den Sieg ueber alle Religionen davonzutragen und dass er selbst 'das Siegel der Propheten,' und der letzte und beste Prophet sei (Sūra 33, 40), auf den es die ganze Entwicklung der Prophetie eigentlich abgesehen habe."<sup>16</sup>

From the above it is plain that the Qur'ān looks upon itself as a message to the world. Therefore its statements, prescribing the treatment to be applied to those who refuse Islām do not limit themselves to Arabia. Moreover, they are clear and precise enough for general purposes. And the mere fact that these statements were made by the prophet in the later years of his life, are perhaps his very last statements with reference to this subject, so far from invalidating them or depressing them to a position of relative unimportance, rather help to make them finally and irrevocably binding. It is altogether futile to point to Sūra 2, 59: "Behold, Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Sabaeans,—whoever believes in Allah and the last day, and acts righteously, his reward is with his Lord, and no fear is upon him, neither will he mourn." This was spoken at a time when Muḥammad hoped for recognition from Jews, Christians, Sabaeans. When they disappointed his expectations (Sūra 2, 114: "The Jews and the Nazarenes will not be satisfied with you, unless you follow their religion"), he changed his mind. Furthermore, Muḥammad himself teaches in the Qur'ān, Sūra 2, 100: "Whatever verses (of the Qur'ān) we abolish or cause to be forgotten, we give better ones or similar ones for

<sup>16</sup> Andrae, Tor. *Die Person Muhammeds in Lehre und Glauben seiner Gemeinde*. Stockholm, 1918, pp. 23, 24.

them. Do you not know that Allah has power over all things?"

*The Practice of Muḥammad.*

Muḥammad, the messenger of Allah, met with little success in Makka. In that he resembled others who had proclaimed the supremacy and unity of Allah before him in that city. For the preaching of the unity of Allah there did not commence with Muḥammad. Zaid ibn 'Amr ibn Nufail, a Ḥanīf, or worshipper of the one, true God, preached the doctrine of the unity of God before Muḥammad. "Sprenger says, 'Mohammad openly acknowledged Zaid as his precursor, and every word known as Zaid's we find again in the Qur'ān.' For instance, Sura 3, 19 Mohammed is bidden to say to the common people, 'Have ye become Muslims?' or 'Have ye surrendered to God?' These words are said by Ibn Ishāq to have been addressed to the people by Zaid in the first place."<sup>17</sup> The Quraish, to whom Muḥammad first addressed his preaching, had some knowledge of Allah and evidently regarded him as the supreme God. In performing the rite known as Ihlāl they addressed Allah in the words: Labbaika, Allahumma! —We are present in Thy service, O Allah; thou hast no partners, except the partner of thy dread; thou ownest him and whatsoever he owneth."<sup>18</sup> Zaid insisted that he had attained to the religion of Abraham, meaning, that like Abraham he worshipped God alone and gave him no associates.<sup>19</sup> In one of his poems he prays to the Merciful

Clair Tisdall, W. *The Original Sources of the Qur'ān*, London, p. 271.

<sup>17</sup> St. Clair Tisdall. P. 36.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn Hishām. *Siratu-l-Rasūl*. Goettingen, Herausgegeben von F. Wuestenfeld, 1860, p. 144.

ful, his Lord, in order that He, the forgiving, may forgive his sin.<sup>20</sup> Muḥammad thought so well of Zaid that he permitted the Muslims to intercede for him, although he had not become a Muslim.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, Zaid as well as 'Ubaidullah, Waraqa, and 'Uthmān, other teachers of the unity of God, were related to Muḥammad. The two last-named were cousins of his first wife, Khadijah, as we learn from the genealogy given by Ibn Hishām. Evidently these precursors of Muḥammad did not characterize themselves by the vehement insistence with which the prophet delivered his message. They were less strenuous in their opposition to the deities whose idols were set up around the Ka'ba at Makka. These idols were very dear to the Quraish, so much so that at one time Muḥammad himself thought that these idols might be retained as intercessors with Allah. The Quraish had promised to accept him as a genuine prophet if he would acknowledge the intercessory abilities of al-Lāt, al-'Uzza, and Manāt. The allurements of the offer were so dazzling to Muḥammad, at least temporarily, that the prophet of Allah was inspired to declare that men ought to hope for the intercession of the deities mentioned. However, the following day the prophet recanted his lapse, blaming Satan for his error.<sup>22</sup> It seems, therefore, that the Quraish would not have been hostile to Muḥammad, would even accorded him the dignity of a prophet, as long as the influence of the other deities would have been conceded. But such a concession meant the overthrow of all of Muḥammad's previous claims. Muḥammad could succeed only by insisting on

<sup>20</sup> Idem. P. 145.

<sup>21</sup> Id. P. 145.

<sup>22</sup> Sūra 53, 19-22. Tabari, *Annales*. Editit De Goeje. Leiden, I. 3, p. 1192.



the rejection of all other gods except Allah. For the corollary of, "There is no God but Allah," was, "Muhammad is his messenger." And in this particular Muhammad differed most decisively from other preachers of the unity of God at Makka. Muhammad was the sole and only mouthpiece of Allah and men must heed his every word under pain of eternal damnation. That is the point the Makkans would not concede. Because of his insistence on this particular the Makkans became his bitter enemies. But their fierce hatred could not coerce him into submission. Their biting sarcasms only provoked storms of oratory announcing the wrath to come. Yet all of this would have been unable to produce a mighty movement in history, such as Islām became. Indeed, if the Makkans had had their way, we would never have heard of Muhammad. Fearing that Muhammad's doctrine would gain too many adherents in Yathrib (Madīna) and realizing that success for Muhammad would mean disaster for the prestige they enjoyed due to the fact that Makka was the center of worship for a large number of Arab tribes, the Quraish of Makka had resolved to settle their old grievance with Muhammad in summary fashion. They wanted to kill him. But Muhammad spoiled their design by timely and successful flight. Moreover, he had skilfully made the most of previous opportunities, so that in the hour of his greatest need the outcast of Makka was warmly welcomed at Madīna.

When the Jews and Arabs of Yathrib, or, as it came to be called later, Madīna, because it became the city of the prophet, the former had much to say about a prophet of theirs who was about to arise. Now some of the Makka pilgrims of Madīna had listened to Muhammad

when he, according to his practice, tried to gain disciples for his teachings from among the pilgrims who visited Makka. These visitors from Madīna persuaded themselves that he must be the prophet whom the Jews of their city were expecting. So they, in order not to be outdone by their Jewish clients, accepted him and returned to their city as propagandists for Islām.<sup>23</sup> Two years later seventy-three men and two women, converts from Madīna, entered into a covenant with the prophet at Aqaba. Muḥammad demanded that they protect him as they would protect their wives and their children. "I will war," declared the prophet, "on whom you make war, and keep peace with whom you keep peace." Incidentally, the compact was based on the rejection of idolatry, acceptance of Islām, and obedience to the will of the prophet.<sup>24</sup> Thus Muḥammad had wisely and effectively paved the way for the future. A band of faithful followers were under oathbound covenant to protect him with their lives, if need arose. For the first there was no other need than to provide lodging and sustenance for the exiled messenger of Allah. It is very significant, however, that at the first opportunity presenting itself the messenger of Allah makes sure of physical protection for himself and pledges his newly-found helpers to defend his person and his cause with the edge of the sword. According to Ibn Hishām it was shortly after the conclusion of this compact with the believers from Madīna that the revelation allowing Muḥammad to use force in behalf of Allah and his cause came down.<sup>25</sup> Up to that time the prophet's mission had

<sup>23</sup> Ibn Hishām. P. 286 seqq.

<sup>24</sup> Ibn Hishām. Pp. 296, 297.

<sup>25</sup> Ibn Hishām. Pp. 313, 314.

been "to call to Allah, to suffer wrong, and to turn away from unbelief." But now the messenger of Allah experienced a change of heart. Merely preaching profited but little. And here were these stalwart men of Madīna, ready to obey his every command. For whatever particulars of his message the prophet changed to suit changing circumstances, he never altered the great fundamental of his doctrine one iota, viz., that Allah made known his will through Muḥammad, and Muḥammad only. And this item of Muslim creed was readily accepted by his adherents from Madīna. No wonder the messenger of Allah rose to the occasion, declared the simple method of preaching and suffering inadequate and sanctioned the use of force in the defence of the new faith. Here was the beginning of the prophet-prince. This new attitude marks the beginning of the new Muḥammad, no longer willing to entrust the issues of his mission to the bare proclamation of his message, but resorting to a new and very material argument to assist in spreading the faith, the argument of a strong arm and a trusty blade.

A further step in the development of Muḥammad into a prophet-prince is found in the charter drawn up about two years after his arrival in Madīna. "The charter of Muḥammad, the prophet, between the believers of the Quraish and of Yathrib, and whosoever else joineth himself to them and striveth with them for the faith—verily, they are a peculiar people, apart from the rest of mankind." <sup>26</sup> Evidently Muḥammad had not permitted the days of his sojourn in Madīna to go by unimproved. He had succeeded in making himself not only theoretically, but also practically a prophet-prince. The prophet of Al-

<sup>26</sup> Ibn Hishām. P. 341.

lah had proclaimed the necessity of putting Allah's messenger at the head of both spiritual and temporal affairs. Indeed, by virtue of his divine mission he must needs have control over all matters, whether purely spiritual or sternly temporal. For he must have the power necessary to secure obedience to the commandments of Allah. Of course, the first to become acquainted with Muḥammad in his new role were the wicked Makkans, who had made life such a burden to the prophet. For there was little value in having power and not using it to the advancement of the cause of Allah. The ruling ambition of the newly fledged prince is to make his old enemies feel the folly of their ways. For certain it is beyond doubt that he, and not the Makkans began hostilities. The permission of Allah, to use the sword in defence of the faith, readily accommodated itself to the purpose of Muḥammad to punish his early adversaries.

But Muḥammad's activities against the Makkans had another objective. They were not only to be punished for their rejection of the prophet, they were also to solve his economic difficulties. In the long run the artificial fraternisation of 'Anṣar, that is, helpers of Muḥammad, such of the people of Madīna who had been among the first to accept him, and Muhājirūn, exiles from Makka who had found a haven of refuge in Madīna and obtained the necessities of life from their "brothers," the 'Anṣār, could not be a permanent success. Hence we find the prophet of Allah ordering raids against the caravans of the Makkans. Such a raid it was that called forth the first battle of Islām against the unbelievers. The richly laden caravan of Abū Sufyān which Muḥammad had hoped to capture escaped. But the Makkans, hastily summoned in defence

of the caravan by Abū Sufyān, continued on their way. The two forces met at Badr. Muḥammad's little band carried the day. Muḥammad had no doubt as to the religious significance of this timely success. He declared that the punishment which he had prophesied against the Makkans had now overtaken them. Allah had vindicated his prophet by giving him victory over his enemies. Muḥammad received one fifth of the booty gained. This divine judgment against the obdurate Makkans proved an argument of great weight in favor of the prophet with the Arab tribes. They had said: "Let Muḥammad and his tribesmen fight each other. If he wins he is a real prophet." Of course, this success at Badr was only a beginning. Yet, according to the measure of genuine prophethood adopted by the Arabs, it was an argument the force of which could not be gainsaid. He was winning, he must be a genuine prophet. Let it be noted, then, that this enterprise had divine sanction and that it was, as Muḥammad claimed, a proof of his divine mission.<sup>27</sup> The Makkans certainly had given no provocation for these attacks. But Muḥammad was justifying his leadership with the edge of the sword.<sup>28</sup> Let it be remembered in this connection that even on this occasion Makkans could have saved their lives by acknowledging Allah, that is, by acknowledging that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah. Failing to do this they must suffer the extreme penalty. The point is that Muḥammad was making war in the interest of religion, his religion, and that peace was

<sup>27</sup> Sūra 8, 6-8; 12, 13.

<sup>28</sup> Muḥammad had made unsuccessful attempts on the caravans of the Makkans in the previous year. The prospect of booty, naturally, swelled the ranks of his followers.

for those who would submit to him. Under these conditions it is not hard to see that Muḥammad was far removed from being tolerant. Such procedure is usually designated persecution. It deserves that designation.

Perhaps the opinion of his early converts at Madīna that he was the prophet whom the Jews were expecting gave Muḥammad the idea to present himself to their acceptance as the Messiah of their hopes. At any rate, he tried to convince the Jews of his mission. He appealed to their Scriptures in proof of his claims. He adopted Jerusalem as the qibla towards which the faithful set their faces during prayer. He had his followers fast the fast of the Jews. Yet all his efforts to convert the Jews were labor lost. They failed utterly to see the light. Indeed, they greatly annoyed the prophet by exposing his profound ignorance of the Jewish Scriptures. They also had recourse to sarcasm.<sup>29</sup> So the messenger of Allah, in order to maintain his prestige, was compelled to assume a different attitude towards them. Pertinent revelations were forthcoming to denounce their folly and their guilt. For as Baidhāwī explains the statement of Sūra 17, 107 ("we sent it down gradually, piece by piece"), the revelations came "according to circumstances."<sup>30</sup> The following quotations from the Qur'ān show us what Muḥammad thought of the Jews, after he had realised that they were not ready and easy mission material for his preaching. Sūra 2, 98, 99 instructs the believers as follows: "O

<sup>29</sup> Ibn Hishām. Pp. 351, 352.

<sup>30</sup> Al-Baidhāwī. *Anwāru-l-Tanzīl*. Lipsiae, G. Vogel, 1846-8, p. 552.

<sup>31</sup> A form of greeting in Arabic. The Jews changed a letter of the word, so that in their language it meant, "Our villain," an insult to Muḥammad.

believers, say not, 'Rā'inā,' but rather, 'Unẓurnā,'<sup>31</sup> and obey; for the unbelievers will receive grievous punishment. The unbelievers among the people of the Book and the idolaters wish that nothing good be sent down from your Lord upon you. But Allah elects for his favors whomsoever he will." Sūra 4, 48, 49 instructs the Muslims thus: "Among the Jews there are some who pervert the order of the words and say: 'We have heard and rebel,'<sup>32</sup> and, 'hear thou without perceiving and look upon us.' A twisting of the tongue it is and a slander of the true religion. And if they had said, 'We hear and obey, and hear thou and look upon us,' it would have been better for them. But Allah has cursed them, and only a few believe." Sūra 5, 62 has this to say, "O believers, do not take as your friends such of the people of the Book who mock at and joke about your religion." In the foregoing section attention was called to the fact that Muḥammad charges the Jews with idolatry. He makes the same accusation in Sūra 4, 54. Muḥammad had evidently changed his mind about the Jews, at least about the Jews of Madīna.

Now the Jews of Madīna, among them the Banū Qainuqā', the Banu-l-Nadhīr, and the Banū Quraiza had a covenant with Muḥammad to the effect that the Jews were to retain their religion and exercise it without interference or molestation. In case anyone violated the pact, he was to be dealt with individually. He would ruin only himself and the members of his house. Wellhausen says that unless the Jews of the Banū-l-Aws and Tha'laba are the Nadnīr and the Quraiza, these two tribes did not enter into any agreement with Muḥammad at the begin-

<sup>32</sup> Instead of "We have heard and obey."

ning, about A.H. 2.<sup>33</sup> Just what the terms of the covenant were which was later adopted by them is very difficult to say. The Qainuqā' however had accepted the early covenant made by Muḥammad with the Jews. But, covenant or no covenant, occasion arose to quarrel with the Jews. The first to feel the weight of Muḥammad's vengeance were the Qainuqā'. Sell relies upon al-Buḥārī to supply the reason for Muḥammad's outburst against them. He says that 'Alī, wishing to marry Fāṭima, Muḥammad's daughter, intended to begin trading. Ḥamza, Muḥammad's uncle, seeing the camels of 'Alī standing ready to be loaded with the goods which some Qainuqā' merchants had promised to advance to the prospective trader, slew the animals and made a feast for his friends. It is stated that Ḥamza was drunk when he committed this piece of rashness. 'Alī's loss was great, yet the marriage was much desired. A way out of the difficulty was found in quarrelling with the Banū Qainuqā' and the means for setting up 'Alī in business were derived from the plunder taken from them.<sup>34</sup> But this is an unlikely story. It does not agree with the accounts of the earlier historians of Islām. Wāqidi, Ibn Hishām and Ibn Sa'd give the following account regarding the Qainuqā'. After the battle of Badr the Jews became jealous and broke the pact existing between them and the messenger of Allah. He assembled them and addressed them as follows: "Assembled Jews, become Muslims. For you know full well that I am a messenger of Allah, since your Bible tells you so. Become Muslims, before Allah strikes you, as he struck the

<sup>33</sup> Wellhausen, J. *Skizzen u. Vorarbeiten*. Berlin, 1889, 4tes Heft, p. 75.

<sup>34</sup> Sell, E. *Life of Mohammad*, pp. 126, 127.



Quraish.”<sup>35</sup> The Jews refused his invitation to Islām and remained impassive to the threat of Allah’s vengeance. They told him not to let his recent success deceive him, as he had dealt with people inexperienced in war. If he would attack them, he would soon perceive that he had never fought their equals before. This latter remark may simply be a recast of the general repute in which the Qainuqā’ stood for bravery and warlike skill. While feeling was thus running high between the Muslims and the Qainuqā’ a most deplorable incident occurred. An Arab woman, married to one of the ‘Anṣār came to the market place of the Qainuqā’ to sell milk. Some of the men present at the time wanted her to unveil her face. In the meantime one of the Jews fastened the hem of her dress to her back, so that when she arose, she presented a spectacle. The woman screamed, as might be expected, while the Jews thought the matter a good joke and mocked her plight with wild peals of laughter. Some Muslims, learning of the indignity she had suffered, killed the offending Jew, and the brethren of the Jew in turn fell upon the Muslim who had despatched their brother. Muḥammad now claimed to have reason for suspecting the Qainuqā’ of treacherous designs against him and the Muslims. Hence the angel Gabriel, through whom Allah transmitted his revelations to his messenger, advised him that in case he

<sup>35</sup> Ibn Hishām relates that, according to Ibn ‘Abbās, Muḥammad addressed the words of Sūra 3, 10. 11 to the Qainuqā’ on this occasion: “You shall be overcome and crammed into hell; a woeful abode it is. You have a sign in a clash between two bodies of men. One party fought in the way of Allah, the other was made up of unbelievers. Their eyes saw double the actual number of opponents, and Allah strengthens with his help whom he wills. Herein lies a warning for the sensible.”

feared treachery in a people he was to pay them in kind, Sūra 8, 60, a revelation which suited the circumstances to a nicety. On the strength of this divine revelation Muḥammad now laid siege to the Qainuqā' who dwelt in a suburb of Madīna. The siege lasted fifteen days, when Allah threw terror into their hearts and they surrendered at discretion. Muḥammad ordered them bound and would have executed them all. But Ibn Ubbay, their patron and leader of the Khazraj, seeing what Muḥammad had in mind, laid hold of the prophet's collar and pleaded insistently that he spare their lives. The prophet's face was black with anger, but Ibn Ubbay did not release his hold nor abate his pleading that the prophet should not mow them all down on one morning, until the messenger of Allah yielded to Ibn Ubbay and spared the lives of the Qainuqā'. But he confiscated their property and exiled them to Syria.<sup>36</sup>

A point that is usually overlooked in this dreary affair is that, even if the hideous insult deserved punishment, the punishment should have been meted out to the guilty party or parties. According to the treaty, an offender was liable for his misdeeds as an individual, or at worst, his own house would have to expiate his crime. The same applies also with reference to the Jews who killed the Muslim that fell on the man who had such perverted ideas about a practical joke. But no effort was made by the prophet to deal with the guilty individuals. At least, no such attempt on the part of Allah's messenger has been recorded.

<sup>36</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 545-7. Wāqidi. *Kitābu-l-Maghāzi*. Edited by Alfred von Kremer. Calcutta, 1856, p. 173. Ibn Sa'd. *Biographien Muhammads, Seiner Gefährten und der Späteren Träger des Islams bis zum Jahre 230 der Flucht*. Band II, Theil I. Herausgegeben von Josef Horowitz, Leiden, 1909, pp. 19, 20.

It is urged in defence of Muḥammad that, rightly considered, this and similar attacks on Jews should not be cited against him as examples of intolerance and persecution, because they do not belong to either of these categories. Wellhausen declares that these attacks were not made for the purpose of compelling the Jews to accept Islām, and that the famous dictum, "There shall be no compulsion in religion," was observed. Grimme writes: "Zum Kampfe gegen die christliche und juedische Religion hat der Prophet nie seine Glaebigen angestachelt, weil er damit einen wichtigen Satz seines Dogmas umgestossen haette, die Annahme, dass alle geoffenbarten Religionen, einerlei ob sie von Moses, Jesus oder Mohammed verkuendigt sind, wahr und in Uebereinstimmung mit einander seien. Deshalb sind seine Judenfeldzuege nicht als Religionskriege, sondern als Racheakte fuer persoenliche Beleidigungen anzusehen."<sup>37</sup> Syed Ameer Ali would have us consider the following: "As a Prophet he could afford to ignore the revilings and the jibes of his enemies; but as the head of the State, 'the general in a time of almost continuous warfare,' when Medīna was kept in a state of military defence and under a sort of military discipline, he could not overlook treachery. He was bound by his duty to his subjects to suppress a party that might have led, and almost did lead to the sack of the city by investing armies. The safety of the State required the proscription of the traitors, who were either sowing the seeds of sedition<sup>38</sup> within Medīna or carrying information to the common enemy."<sup>39</sup> In the same connection he says

<sup>37</sup> Grimme, Hubert. *Mohammed*. Münster, 1892, p. 124.

<sup>38</sup> I.e., refusing to accept Muḥammad and all his claims.

<sup>39</sup> Ameer Ali, Syed. *The Spirit of Islam*. London, Christophers, p. 60.

that the Jews were enraged at Muḥammad because they could not use him as their instrument for the conversion of Arabia to Judaism, that they libelled him and his followers, mispronounced words of the Qur'ān so as to give them an offensive meaning, in short were a most dangerous element in the state which Muḥammad had called into being.

If the reports of the early historians of Islām with reference to Muḥammad's dealing with the Qainuqā' are only approximately correct, and there is reason to believe that they have, in the main, given a satisfactory account, then it is hard to see how the rule, "No compulsion in religion," was observed in the case under consideration. Muḥammad did put the Jews before the issue of Islām or war. With reference to the Banū Qainuqā' the historians explicitly state that Muḥammad invited them to Islām and that upon their refusal to acknowledge him he committed his case to the decision of arms. Had the Jews agreed that their Scriptures did foretell his coming and that he was what he claimed to be, certainly Muḥammad would not have proceeded against them. If the threat of military force had resulted in conversion, yielding to this missionary method would have secured immunity. Moreover, in the case of the Qainuqā' there is hardly any motive for personal vengeance, as Grimme suggests. As for Syed Ameer Ali, one gets the impression that whatsoever Muḥammad did was right and good merely because Muḥammad did it, and that the Jews really should have submitted meekly to Muḥammad's claims, that not to do so was sowing sedition, and that therefore Allah's messenger justly punished the refractory Jews. For that, unwillingness to submit to Muḥammad in all his pretensions, whether as ruler of the

state or as founder of a religion, was really the crime of the Jews. Finally, let it be noted, that the messenger of Allah very conveniently gets the revelation that, in case he suspects treachery from any quarter, he has the right to proceed without delay and root out such treachery.<sup>40</sup> He is the one to decide upon his mere personal and individual suspicion whether he must act against an individual or a number of persons and when he so decides, all is good and well. But that is insisting that Muḥammad is infallibly right always. To take a different attitude amounts to opposing the messenger of Allah, is equivalent to rebellion against God's prophet, and merits summary punishment. Criticism of the prophet is rebellion against the divine will. Such criticism was extremely dangerous, as the Banu Qainuqā' learned from bitter experience.

In the year A.D. 625 the chief of the Banū 'Āmir, Abū Barā',<sup>41</sup> came to Muḥammad to investigate his teaching and requested him to send missionaries to his people. Abū Barā' himself was inclined to accept the faith Muḥammad proposed to him, but decided to postpone his conversion until he learned what course his people would adopt towards the new faith. As the Banū 'Āmir were allies of the Quraish Muḥammad hesitated about complying with Abū Barā' 's request. However, promises assuring the safety of Muḥammad's emissaries were given and the prophet resolved to make the most of this opportunity of doing mission work for Islām. He sent forty, according to another report, seventy men, perhaps an unusually large number if nothing further than teaching was expected. When the Muslim missionaries arrived at their

<sup>40</sup> Sūra 8, 60.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 648.

destination they found that Abū Barā' was not among his people and that the reins of leadership were in the hands of 'Āmir b. Ṭufail, an avowed enemy of Muḥammad and his followers. All but two of the missionaries were treacherously slain. One of the two survivors, 'Amr b. Umayya,<sup>42</sup> chanced upon two men of the Banū 'Āmir while they were asleep and slew them. He reported his feat to the prophet. But the latter was not edified by the news thus received, because the two men who had been slain were under his protection, a fact of which the slayer was ignorant. He paid the required blood-money at once. But that was not the end of the matter. The Banū-l-Nadhīr were bound to the Banū 'Āmir by compact and covenant and Muḥammad thought that they should pay at least part of the blood-money.<sup>43</sup> When the prophet made known his object to the Banū-l-Nadhīr they were willing at once to help him in the way he required. Moreover, they invited him to stay and share their repast with them. The prophet and his retinue were nothing loath to accept the hospitality offered and while awaiting the meal sat down, the prophet leaning his back against a house. The Jews, however, had treachery in their hearts. They soon perceived that a most remarkable opportunity to slay Muḥammad and put an end to their troubles had arisen quite unexpectedly. In fact, a Jew was on the very verge of tumbling a sizeable stone from the roof of the house against which the prophet leaned upon the unsuspecting messenger of Allah. But the murderous design of the Jews was frustrated by the intervention of Allah. A heavenly mes-

<sup>42</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 651. Wāqidi, p. 353.

<sup>43</sup> Ibn Hishām, pp. 652 ff. Wāqidi, p. 353. Ibn Sa'd, Vol. II, 1. pp. 41, 42.

senger made the prophet aware of his danger and he rose abruptly and departed hastily. The companions of the prophet had seen nothing amiss and waited for the prophet to return until they despaired of his re-appearance. So they also went back to the city. Then one of the Jews spoke up and declared that Muḥammad was indeed the last of the prophets and that the Jewish Scriptures foretell his coming to a nicety, that it was the duty of the Jews to become Muslims and so be safe. When the companions of the prophet found their master in Madīna he told them that the Jews had plotted against him and that he had sent Muḥammad b. Maslama to the Nadhīr with the injunction to leave the country.<sup>44</sup> The emissary of Muḥammad did as he was bidden, reminding the Jews of the prophecies they had made concerning the coming one and urging that Muḥammad fulfilled these prophecies. In ten days they must leave on account of their treachery against the messenger of Allah. Any member of their tribe found after that time would be beheaded. They said: "We did not expect one of the 'Aws (the Arab tribe whose clients they had been before Muḥammad set up his Muslim state) to tell us that." He replied, "Hearts have changed,"<sup>45</sup> that is, Islām automatically severs any previous ties and cancels all former obligations. The Jews foolishly relied on promises of help and resolved to oppose Muḥammad. After he had besieged them about fifteen or twenty days, they surrendered upon assurance that they would be permitted to leave the country. Their land was apportioned among the refugees from Makka.

It is noteworthy that none of the prophet's companions

<sup>44</sup> Wāqidi, p. 354.

<sup>45</sup> Wāqidi, p. 354.

saw anything amiss while they were in the quarters of the Banū-l-Nadhīr. There were several of them and it is very likely that one or another would have discovered that something was wrong. But they were quite ignorant of any untoward design being carried out against their master. Furthermore, the prophet himself did not see anything wrong. The historians do say that the Jews talked with one another privately. But even that seems to have aroused no suspicions either in the prophet or his followers. It took a heavenly messenger to apprise Allah's messenger of the Jews' full purpose. Then, and only then, did he realise that his life was in imminent peril. At the same time there is enough material in the accounts of the early historians of Islām to show that the religious motive was active here also. There is the Jew who tells his tribesmen that Muḥammad is indeed the promised one of their expectation and that the course of truth and wisdom lies in accepting him. In other words, an opportunity to embrace Islām was given them. The same fact is urged by the messenger whom Muḥammad sent to announce his sentence of exile. He also urges that Muḥammad is the prophet for whom they have been waiting and that they should accept him. These statements are valuable in showing that the religious element had much to do with Muḥammad's decision to be rid of them. Sūra 59, dealing with Muḥammad's enterprise against the Banū-l-Nadhīr, says: "If Allah had not written (decreed) exile against them, he would have punished them in this world,"<sup>46</sup> and in the next world their portion is the punishment of fire. That, because they have opposed Allah and his messenger. Be-

<sup>46</sup> Ibn Hishām says that "punishment in this world" means death by the sword. Ibn Hishām, p. 654.



hold, Allah punishes severely." The word "oppose" does not necessarily mean armed resistance. It may also mean "to disagree with one." If that is the case, then the disagreement means nothing more than refusal to accept Muḥammad as prophet of Allah. If it be urged that the Jews did oppose the prophet after he told them to quit the country, that, it seems to us, only makes matters worse. Such a view relies upon the conviction that Muḥammad had a divine right to order the Jews forth the land and that disobedience to his unreasonable order meant opposition to the will of God. Certainly the Jews did not oppose Muḥammad in the matter of bloodwit. They were willing to pay. Furthermore, if they had really had designs on his life, if the fatal stone had all but proved fatal, it is not likely that they would have gotten off as leniently as they did, even after they refused obsequious obedience to Muḥammad's tyrannical order of exile. Truth is, no doubt, that they opposed Muḥammad in his claims and pretensions. For that Allah, that is, Muḥammad, decreed exile against them. They furnish another instance of the negative missionary method of Muḥammad, "Und bist du nicht willig so brauch' ich Gewalt." At the same time there was also a powerful element of political necessity in this case. Muḥammad kept the entire booty taken from the exiled Jews for himself. He had instructions from Allah, sanctioning this procedure, Sūra 59, 7.

When Abū Sufyān, the leader of the Quraish, supported by an army of ten thousand warriors (A.D. 627), set his face towards Madīna to hold conclusive reckoning with the prophet for his many misdeeds,<sup>47</sup> a Persian adherent

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Hishām says, some of the exiled Nadhirites instigated this expedition. Ibn Hishām, p. 669.

of Islām, Salmān by name, very fortunately counselled the prophet not to try issues with so formidable a force in the open field, but to remain behind the security of breast-works, a mode of warfare quite unknown to the Arabs. Muḥammad saw the wisdom of this advice and acted upon it. The Jewish tribe of the Banū Quraiza, who were on good terms with the prophet at that time, readily loaned spades, pick-axes, and baskets to the Muslims on the request of the prophet.<sup>48</sup> Now while the siege was in progress, so the historians relate, Ḥuyyay, one of the banished Nadhīrites, came to Ka'b b. 'Asad, the leader of the Quraiza, to urge him into treachery against Muḥammad. Ka'b would not even admit Ḥuyyay to his house. However, when Ḥuyyay taunted him with miserliness, charging that Ka'b refused him admission merely because he begrudged him the little food he might eat, the latter yielded. After much arguing back and forth, Ka'b was induced to break the covenant with Muḥammad, tearing up the charter given them by the prophet.<sup>49</sup> Muḥammad, who somehow got wind of this transaction, sent messengers to the Quraiza for the purpose of ascertaining what had happened. Put to task about the covenant of the prophet the Jews declared: "Who is the messenger of Allah? There is neither covenant nor agreement between us and Muḥammad." Upon hearing this utterance of the Jews Muḥammad sounded the Takbīr and bade the Muslims rejoice.<sup>50</sup> In addition to the above damaging testimony against the Jews the historians tell us that the Quraiza were carrying on negotiations with

<sup>48</sup> Wellhausen, *Muḥammed in Medina*, p. 192.

<sup>49</sup> Ibn Hishām, pp. 674-5.

Hishām, p. 675.

Abū Sufyān, that they promised to help against the Muslims if the Quraish would give them hostages, or, as another tradition has it, that the Quraish demanded hostages from the Jews in order to commit them against Muḥammad, that the Jews refused aid at the critical moment because they would not fight on the Sabbath, that on one occasion eleven Jewish warriors undertook a nocturnal raid against a certain part of the city. But no considerable effort was undertaken by the Jews against Muḥammad. They could not make up their minds to help Abū Sufyān and his warriors, who were rapidly learning that their task was hopeless. On the morning of the 25th of April, A.D. 627, the besiegers broke camp and returned to Makka. And the prophet gave thanks to Allah for so signally espousing his cause. He went to the house of ‘Ā’iṣa, resolved to allow himself the rest he needed so much after the strenuous days of the siege.

But his plans were frustrated by Allah. While engaged in washing his head, Muḥammad was surprised by the apparition of the angel Gabriel, gorgeously arrayed and mounted on a splendidly caparisoned mule.<sup>51</sup> “Have you already doffed your armor, O messenger of Allah? The angels have not. Behold, Allah commands you to proceed at once against the Banū Quraiza. I am bound for their quarters myself, to shake up their fortresses.” Thus spoke the angel Gabriel to the messenger of Allah. At least, so say the historians. But whether the angel Gabriel appeared or not—some of the Muslims mistook the angel Gabriel whom Muḥammad had recognized so readily for one of Muḥammad’s warriors—certain it is that Muḥammad commanded the Muslims to proceed for the quarters

<sup>51</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 684 ff.; Wāqidi, 371 ff.; Ibn Sa’d, II, 1. p. 53 ff.

of the Banū Quraiza at once. None of the Muslims should dare to say the afternoon prayer in any other place but before the fortress of the Quraiza. Needless to say, the Muslims did with alacrity what the messenger of Allah commanded. Thus began the siege of the Quraiza. It lasted fifteen days. Huyyay, the Nadhīrite, who had promised to share the fate of the Quraiza and kept his promise, proposed three courses as open to the besieged Jews. The first was, to become Muslims. The Jews refused. The second, to kill their wives and their children and fight to the death. This plan too was rejected. The third was, to undertake a surprise attack on the Sabbath. But religious scruples vetoed that proposal. A messenger of Muḥammad convinced the Jews that they must surrender at discretion and by a significant gesture gave them to understand what fate was awaiting them. When the Jews surrendered, overcome by starvation, they asked that the Banū 'Aws, whose clients they had been, intercede for them with the prophet. The result of their intercession was that Muḥammad chose Sa'd b. Mu'adh, who had been wounded in the recent defence of the city, to decide the fate of the Jews. Sa'd was very angry with the Jews because they had not helped the Muslims against the Quraish. The selection of Sa'd as judge of the fate of the Jews plainly shows the prophet's mind. Nor did Sa'd fail to measure up to his master's expectations. Realising that he would succumb to his wounds he was anxious to perform a work of piety that would help his soul in the great beyond. He advised that all over whom the razor had passed, that is, all the men, be put to the sword and that the women and children be sold into slavery. Muḥammad assured the grim warrior that his verdict was that of

Allah in the seventh heaven. The prophet had trenches dug in the market place and sat by, looking on, while from six hundred to eight hundred men were being beheaded. The women and children were sold as slaves.

It is, no doubt, difficult to determine precisely the guilt both of Muḥammad and of the Jews in this affair. Muir justly remarks: "I have much hesitation in determining what the compact was at this time existing between Mohammed and the Quraiza, and what part the Quraiza actually took in assisting the allies. The evidence is altogether ex parte, and is, of course, as adverse to the Jews as possible." Sprenger's opinion is: "Ich zweifle nicht, dass das Benehmen der Banu Koraytza (bei der Belagerung von Medina) sehr zweideutig war. In der Haltung der Banu Koraytza erblickten die Moslime Gefahr, aber ein offener Treubruch liegt nicht vor."<sup>52</sup> It is, no doubt, more than probable that, if the besiegers had scored some success against the Muslims, the Quraiza would have rendered them assistance. As for the story of Huyyay's intrigue and Ka'b's treachery, one is disposed to ask, how the Muslims could have known with such accuracy of detail what had transpired in an apparently clandestine meeting between the two. Then there is the pointed statement of the Jews to the messenger of Muḥammad that they had neither pact nor agreement with Muḥammad. Evidently the Jews believed that whatever agreement existed between them and the Muslims did not apply to a situation such as was then confronting the adherents of Allah. Indeed, the Muslim historians are not clear on this point. According to some, the Jews had pledged themselves to

r, Aloys. *Das Leben und die Lehre des Moḥammad*, Berlin, 1869, Vol. III, p. 215, note.

nothing further than that they would not help Muḥammad's enemies, according to others, they were bound to resist an attack on Madina. Ibn Sa'd says that at that time there was between Muḥammad and the Banu Quraiza "a precarious compact," evidently meaning one that had not sufficient stringency to make their assistance obligatory. The accounts dealing with Ka'b's surrender to Huyyay persistence show that really only Ka'b offended in tearing up the treaty with Muḥammad, since the other Jews abundantly reprobated his folly,<sup>53</sup> a circumstance which should have exempted the rest of the Jews from Muḥammad's vengeance.

Of somewhat different aspect is the charge of intrigues undertaken by the Jews with Muḥammad's enemies. But here too it must be borne in mind that the evidence is altogether *ex parte*. If these clandestine dealings had really been carried on, it is strange indeed that the treachery and plotting of the Jews is not merely given as sufficient warrant for the enterprise against them. That, however, is not the case. The historians say that upon the retreat of the besieging forces Muḥammad went home, laid aside his armor, and began to wash his head, having no further thought of warlike exertion for the time being. The Quraiza indeed expected the prophet to turn his arms against them now that the peril of the siege was over. But the prophet evidently had other plans. It took none less than the angel Gabriel to rouse the prophet to action against the Jews. So the siege of the Quraiza was undertaken because Allah ordered it. And Allah does not charge the Quraiza with flagrant violation of their treaty, but modestly limits himself to the accusation that they had

<sup>53</sup> Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medina*, p. 197.

"assisted the allies," disdaining to condescend to detail and particular. Syed Ameer Ali would have us understand that this exploit against the Quraiza was indispensable to the peace and safety of Muhammad and his adherents and to the success of his cause. "But the victory was hardly achieved in the opinion of the Moslems as long as the Bani-Kuraiza remained so near, in such dangerous proximity to the city of Islam. They had proved themselves traitors in spite of their sworn allegiance, and had at one time almost surprised Medina from their side—an event which, if successful, would have involved the general massacre of the faithful. The Moslems therefore felt it their duty to demand an explanation of their treachery. This was doggedly refused. The consequence was that the Jews were besieged, and compelled to surrender at discretion. The number of men could not have been more than two hundred or two hundred and fifty." <sup>54</sup> The surprise attack of which this writer speaks was undertaken by eleven men, that is, if it was undertaken at all. They could hardly have done much damage. As a matter of fact, they were ignominiously chased back home by vigilant Muslims. The historians say that from six hundred to eight hundred men were put to the sword. And if there were but two hundred men of the Banu Quraiza, it is hard to see how such a small band could be so dangerous, especially when an army of ten thousand men could not take Madina. But then, this writer also gravely informs us that "even now, Christian America burns alive a Christian negro marrying a Christian white woman!" <sup>55</sup> No wonder that other facts are exaggerated by him beyond all semblance of recognition.

<sup>54</sup> Ameer Ali, Syed. *The Spirit of Islam*. London, pp. 79, 80.

<sup>55</sup> Id. p. 219.

But while it is difficult to determine guilt and fix blame, there is no trouble about the final event. Muḥammad made himself guilty of a hideous atrocity, and that without much provocation that might be alleged in palliation of this execrable deed. Let it not be overlooked that the Quraiza would have been safe, had they heeded Huyyay's advice to become Muslims. In that event Muḥammad's display of force against them would have been regarded by the messenger of Allah as a splendid missionary method achieving excellent results. Since the Jews would not yield, they must die. And thus Muḥammad was relieved of the thorn that had been galling his side. His authority in Madīna was now safely established through the removal of those who had so seriously annoyed him through their unbelief and their criticism. More, these violent measures helped him greatly to realise his schemes by the wealth which they netted him.

Since the troublesome Jews had been disposed of in the fashion stated, Muḥammad was in undisputed control at Madīna. He thought the time ripe for a move that would help very considerably in winning over many Arabs to his claims and his cause. He had already abandoned Jerusalem as the qibla of the faithful, the point to which they turned while performing their prayers, and had substituted the month of Ramadhān for Tishri as the month of fasting. Moreover, the signal failure of the Quraish to take Madīna, capture the prophet, and ruin his cause irretrievably, had not been without effect upon some of the pagan Arab tribes. Muḥammad's continued success was ample and incontrovertible proof of his divine mission. And now the prophet made a strategic and telling move. The tribes of Arabia still regarded Makka with its Ka'ba



as their religious center. Muḥammad fell in with this conviction of theirs and resolved to show his own opinion about this ineradicable belief of the Arabs in a most satisfactory manner. He decided to make the lesser pilgrimage to the Ka'ba.<sup>56</sup> This was in A.D. 628. No doubt the prophet himself had considerable reverence for the holy place of his native people, and perhaps it is unfair to credit his pilgrimage to shrewd and calculating policy exclusively. His followers felt much more than the prophet the urge to re-visit the holy places from which allegiance to Muḥammad's cause had barred them for about six years. To allay any anxiety that might be felt by the Makkans as to the integrity of his purpose he set out with no more than fifteen hundred men, armed only with a sword. But even so the Makkans were not convinced of the prophet's singleness of heart. They flew to arms at the news of his coming, prepared to demonstrate with vigor that the prophet would not achieve his aim. But this time the prophet had set out on an errand of peace and was not minded to be drawn from his purpose. So he evaded the possibility of encounter with the Makkans by turning aside to Hudaibiya, situated on the border of the sacred territory. Yet, if the prophet failed, to the great mortification of his pious warriors, to enter the holy place of his and his companions' desire, this undertaking of his was profitable in another direction. He succeeded in concluding a ten-year truce with the Makkans, an achievement that must have been welcome enough to those of his followers who came from Makka, and doubly so to the Makkans, as it guaranteed the safety of their future business ventures.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 740.

One of the terms agreed upon in the truce was that Muḥammad and his followers were granted permission to enter Makka and remain there for three days during the next pilgrimage. It is noteworthy that the Makkans were quite willing to have the truce begin with "In the name of Allah," but protested strenuously and successfully against the epithets which Muḥammad joined to the divine name, "the compassionate, the merciful." Evidently they believed in Allah, but evidently, also, they "gave him associates." The same unbending stubbornness with which they opposed the Muḥammadan attributes of Allah they brought to bear against the distinctive claims of Muḥammad. They would not write into the truce the formula: "Muḥammad, the messenger of Allah." The prophet had to content himself with the less pretentious designation of "the son of 'Abdulla" as identifying him as one of the parties to the truce.<sup>57</sup>

But while it may seem to us that in spite of this resistance to the prophet's claims and plans this pious enterprise netted very appreciable results for the messenger of Allah, the Muslims did not view the matter in that light. They were deeply disappointed. They had hoped so fervently for the realisation of their pious longing, that they were disappointed beyond measure and most thoroughly depressed when they found that they must needs defer the fulfilment of their ardent hope till the next year. In addition to this cause of discontent there seems to have been another, and that, one of most immediate and most emphatic appeal. Caetani <sup>58</sup> refers to a tradition preserved by al-Buhārī which says that when the prophet returned

<sup>57</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 747.

<sup>58</sup> *Annali dell' Islam*, Vol. 2. 1, p. 10.

to Madīna from his frustrated pilgrimage, 'Ā'īṣa declared that if the Muslims would go to Khaibar, all the faithful would have dates. In other words, there was a painful shortage of food. Whether this tradition reflects facts or whether it is without foundation in fact, is hard to say. However, the silence of Ibn Hishām, Wāqidi, and Ibn Sa'd as to a valid reason for the attack on Khaibar apparently enough argue somewhat in favor of this tradition.<sup>59</sup> Yet, on the other hand, it must needs be pointed out that the likeliest motive for the expedition against Khaibar was the disappointment of Muḥammad's followers over their failure to enter Makka. Their drooping spirits needed reviving. Now it is evident that nothing would have so refreshing an effect on their failing spirits as the acquisition of booty, especially if food happened to be scarce at Madīna. And though the historians can find no special justification for the adventure, the messenger of Allah found ample warrant for the expedition, if Baidhāwī's note on Sūra 48, 20, which promises the Muslims rich booty, is correct.<sup>60</sup> For he says that these words refer to Khaibar. Caetani says with reference to Khaibar: "It is certain that Muḥammad decided to attack and destroy the Hebrew community solely for reasons of political expediency, not for any particular offence on its part. It was an act of arbitrary aggression which the Muslim historians have never been at any pains to justify. Their silence on this matter is most eloquent."<sup>61</sup> But let us not forget that this piece of political expediency was executed

<sup>59</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 755, ff.; Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medina*, p. 290; Ibn Sa'd, II, 1. p. 77 ff.

<sup>60</sup> Baidhāwī. *Anwār-u-l-tanzīl*. Lipsiae, 1846-8, p. 129.

*dell' Islam*, Vol. 2, 1., p. 9.

at the behest of the messenger of Allah. He summoned his faithful ones forth into this particular "way of Allah." The order to proceed against Khaibar was a divine command, given by a prophet who communicated to his followers Allah's will, announced by a prophet whose will must be implicitly and unquestioningly obeyed by faithful Muslims intent upon their souls' salvation. It makes very little difference in the end whether we assume that hunger drove Muḥammad to publishing the oracles which evoked this raid, or whether the pronouncement that set the Muslim army into motion on this occasion was the result of the all too apparent dissatisfaction and disappointment of Muḥammad's followers, or whether both of these causes combined led to the assault. In any case, it was an instance of fighting in the way of Allah. According to Ibn Sa'd, Muḥammad distinctly commanded that they only who were eager for the Jihād should participate in this raid.<sup>62</sup> The enterprise was to be undertaken with genuine religious enthusiasm. He adds that this expedition was very painful to the Jews still remaining in Madīna. Yet, it seems, they had learned the wisdom of not criticising the commands which Muḥammad received from Allah, even though these commands summoned the faithful into action against their people. To 'Alī, who was standard-bearer at Khaibar, Muḥammad said: "Fight against them, until they confess that there is no God but Allah and that Muḥammad is his messenger. If they do this they save their blood and their possessions."<sup>63</sup> Evidently the attack took the Jews completely by surprise, for the morning after the arrival of the Muslim forces the field laborers of

<sup>62</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Vol. II, 1, p. 77.

<sup>63</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Vol. II, 1, p. 80.

Khaibar went out to their daily tasks, quite unaware of any hostile move afoot against them, a circumstance which goes to show that no hostilities were expected.

As in his previous undertakings against the Jews, so in this instance also, Muḥammad was thoroughly successful. At first he intended to drive the Jews of Khaibar out of Arabia, but he revised his opinion and the Jews stayed. It almost seems as if this revised opinion were a sterner punishment than exile. Had they gone into exile they would have been permitted to carry off their possessions with the exception of their silver and gold. However, some of the Jews tried to hide some of their treasures from the prophet. They failed and paid the penalty for their folly. Then the prophet gave order that they should remain in Khaibar and that half the produce of the soil should belong to the Muslims. Another tradition says that a further condition was added, namely, that they were to remain on their land at the discretion of the prophet, or rather, as long as Allah willed it.<sup>64</sup> It has been said that this latter condition is plainly an *ex eventu dictum* of Allah's messenger. 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb, it is argued, drove the Jews of Khaibar out. In order to give this act of his the highest possible sanction, pious devotion invented this clause of the treaty. One cannot deny that this may have been the case. Nevertheless, it is not the only solution that suggests itself. After all, what were the Jews to do, if Muḥammad forbade them to leave their homes and informed them that half the produce of the soil was to be paid to the Muslims? Also, what effective resistance could they muster to compel a revision of the terms imposed,

<sup>64</sup> Ibn Sa'd, l. c.

<sup>65</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 779.

even though they might be as precarious and uncertain as the historians relate? In any case, the whole affair is bad enough. It must have been, if even Muslim historians could devise no justification for it.

The occasion of the expedition against Muta, A.H. 8., was the wanton murder of a messenger Muḥammad had sent to the king of Bostra-Shurahbil b. 'Amr, the Ghasسانide, seized and slew the prophet's envoy at Muta'.<sup>66</sup> No other messenger of Muḥammad had ever met a like fate. Indignant over the outrage the prophet dispatched an army of three thousand men under Zaid b. Ḥarith against Muta. He instructed Zaid to invite the enemies to Islām. If they refused the invitation to the true faith they must pay jizya. If they found that alternative unacceptable, Zaid must proceed to fight them. When the army reached Mu'ān in Syria, the Muslims learned to their consternation that Heraclius had assembled an army of one hundred thousand men to crush them. Nearly every soldier of the Muslim army lost heart at these tidings. They thought it advisable to inform Muḥammad of the unexpected situation and to await his orders. But Abdallah b. Rawah took the fearful Muslims to task very sharply. They were loath, he stormed, to endure the martyrdom they had gone forth to seek. They ought to bear in mind that their strength lay not in numbers or power, but in the religion with which Allah had honored them. Therefore they should go forward either to victory or to martyrdom. It turned out to be defeat and martyrdom. For when the Muslims met the enemy's forces, composed of Romans, that is, Byzantines, and Arabs, they were severely beaten.

<sup>66</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 791 ff.; Wellhausen, *Muḥammad in Medīna*, p. 309 ff.; Ibn Sa'd, II, 1, pp. 92-95.

On their return to Madīna the disappointed and angry faithful threw dust into the faces of the vanquished warriors and accused them of fleeing "in the way of Allah." Among the slain was the leader of the expedition, Zaid b. Harith.

Muir says with reference to Muta: "Tidings of the approach of this formidable army (3000 men) reached Shurahbil, who summoned to his assistance all the tribes of the vicinity. The hostile incursions which Mohammed had from time to time directed against the Syrian border, the repeated attacks on Duma, the conquest of Kheibar, and his generally aggressive attitude toward the north, had no doubt led to the precautionary measures of alliance among the people of the frontier." While the murder of Muḥammad's messenger was ill-advised, Shurahbil and his allies evidently knew that the prophet had missionary plans that would sooner or later have to be faced by the candidates for his missionary zeal. It is, in any case, interesting to note that the messenger of Allah instructs Zaid first of all to offer Islām to the enemies he is to attack. Whether these offers were made in sincerity and good faith, or whether they were merely a formula to be absolved before commencing hostilities does not greatly alter the final estimate of the enterprise. Certain it is that if Shurahbil and his allies had accepted Islām, or had agreed to pay jizya, there would have been no bloodshed. Moreover, it cannot be denied that the messenger of Allah would have been thoroughly gratified if these enemies of Islām had come into the fold of Islām, even if "conversion" had come as a result of the application of armed force.

In A.D. 631 Muḥammad undertook another expedition

against the Romans, that is, the Byzantines. This was the expedition to Tabūk. The Nabataeans who made a practice of bringing oil and flour to market in Madīna this year also brought the news that Heraclius had assembled a very large army and that he had stored up provisions for this army sufficient for a year. Muḥammad promptly and zealously summoned the faithful to make ready for the way of Allah. Contrary to his practice, Muḥammad even published the destination of this expedition. It seems, however, that spite the prophet's zeal, response to his ringing appeals was not as whole-hearted as it might have been. The weather was stiflingly hot and many of the Muslims were loath to exchange what little comfort they had at home for the frightfulness of the desert. But Muḥammad was determined to have his way. When word reached him that certain people were assembled in the house of Suwailam, a Jew, fomenting plans to spread discontent among the people generally, he immediately sent Talḥa b. 'Ubaydallah and had him burn the house to the ground.<sup>67</sup> At length an army of 30,000 men was assembled and Muḥammad ventured forth against the army of Heraclius, anxious to have the Byzantines become acquainted with the prowess of warriors fighting in the way of Allah. But when the Muslim forces reached Tabūk they found no emperor and no army to oppose them. The Nabataeans had their story about the emperor and his vast army by hearsay and had merely passed it on.

Incidentally Muḥammad's expedition to Tabūk did not remain entirely barren of results. While Ukaidir of Dūma, son of 'Abd al Malik, the king of the Kinda, and a

<sup>67</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 893. To those who complained of the heat Muḥammad said, "The fire of Gehenna is hotter" Sūra 9, 82).



Christian, was on his housetop one evening, enjoying the peace and beauty of a moonlight night in the company of his wife and several songstresses, the queen saw two wild oxen rubbing their horns against the castle gate.<sup>68</sup> The king, who was a great hunter, at once set out together with one of his brothers to give chase to this game. He was quite unaware of the fact that Muḥammad had dispatched Khālid with 420 warriors against him. Khālid captured both hunters with ease. The brother of Ukaidir resisted and was slain. Ukaidir was brought before the prophet, who imposed the following terms: Dūma should be opened to the prophet and jizya in the shape of one thousand camels, eight hundred head of cattle, four hundred armors and four hundred lances should be paid. Sell says that Khālid promised the Christian prince his life, if he accepted Islām, but he had to give up his fortresses, his arms and horses, as well as his unoccupied lands. Since the prince had not taken up arms, nor in any way interfered with the Muslims, this must be regarded as a clear case of conversion by the sword.<sup>69</sup> Such was not the case, however, for Ukaidir agreed to pay jizya, which proves that he did not accept Islām. Had he become a Muslim, he would have been safe in his person and his possessions. No doubt Khālid offered Islām to Ukaidir's acceptance, but the Christian refused the offer. Hence his losses.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 903, Balādhuri, *Futuḥu-l-Buldān*. Edidit M. J. de Goeje. Leiden, 1866, pp. 62-63.

<sup>69</sup> Sell, E. *Life of Muḥammad*. London, The Christian Literature Society for India, 1913, p. 208.

<sup>70</sup> Balādhuri gives two versions about Ukaidir, one to the effect that he became a Muslim, the other that he remained a Christian and agreed to pay jizya. Upon the death of the prophet Ukaidir refused to pay the tax, thus violating the covenant. Khālid, at Abu

Another Christian prince, John of Aila,<sup>71</sup> also received a treaty from the prophet. It seems he came voluntarily, having learned wisdom from Ukaidir's experience.<sup>72</sup> He too agreed to pay jizya, as did also the inhabitants of Jarba and Azruh. Thus the prophet was acting according to the principle laid down by Allah in the ninth Sūra. These people had not offended against Islām in any other way than in not being Muslims. However, this difference of faith was sufficient warrant for an attack. They could save themselves from the humiliation and inconvenience of jizya by renouncing their faith and embracing Islām in its stead. Let it be noted, then, that the messenger of Allah applies this missionary method not only to Jews living in and around Madīna, but also to Christians living at a great distance, in this case, fifteen nights' travel from Madīna.

In the year 10 A.H. fourteen chief men of Najrān, heeding the invitation of Muḥammad to become Muslims or come to terms, repaired to Madīna.<sup>73</sup> On reaching the city of the prophet they entered the mosque. But Muḥammad would not speak to them. 'Uthmān told them, the prophet was displeased with their clothing, for they were

Bakr's behest, proceeded against Ukaidir and killed him, because he was an apostate. Balādhurī, pp. 62, 63. The tradition that Ukaidir became a Muslim is repeated in Al-Nawawī. But the other tradition is also prominently mentioned. "Ukaidir was a Christian, and when the prophet had given him a treaty, he returned to his fortress and stayed there. Then Khālīd, in the time of Abu Bakr, the Ṣadiq, besieged him and killed him, polytheist Christian that he was, because he had broken his covenant. He withheld that which he had agreed to pay." Al-Nawawī. Goettingen, 1842, p. 162.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 912.

<sup>72</sup> Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medīna*, p. 405.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Sa'd in Wellhausen, *Jul. Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*. Berlin, 4tes Heft. Arabic text, pp. 8, 26, 76. Balādhurī, pp. 64, 65.

attired in silk. The following morning they returned to the prophet, this time clad in monastic garb. Their salutation did not remain unanswered, as on the day previous. The prophet at once invited them to embrace Islām. They refused to comply.<sup>74</sup> Much talk and abundant argument ensued. Finally the prophet made a queer proposal, that is, queer for a prophet. He spoke on this wise: "If ye deny that which I say unto you, come, let us curse each other." Sūra 3 preserves this strange proposition and also tells us something about the instruction Muḥammad gave these emissaries from Najrān. "Behold, Jesus is like Adam. Allah created him out of dust. Then he said to him, 'Be,' and he was. This is the truth of thy Lord. Therefore doubt not. And to him who argues with you about it, although true knowledge has come to you, say: 'Come on, let us call our sons and your sons, and our wives and your wives, and ourselves and yourselves, and then let us implore Allah and let us put the curse of Allah on the liars. Behold, this is a true record, and there is no God but Allah, and truly, Allah is the mighty, the wise. But if they turn away, behold, Allah knows the evildoers. Say, 'O people of the Book, let us come to an agreement that we serve Allah and place no one beside him as an equal, and let none of us take other lords beside Allah.' But if they turn away, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims (i.e., worshippers of the true God), O people of the Book. Why do you dispute about Abra-

<sup>74</sup> They said, they had been Muslims before the prophet had accepted Islām. The prophet gave them the lie, for, besides eating pork and worshipping the cross, they ascribed a Son to Allah. The question of the Christians, "Who then is Jesus' Father?" is answered for them by the prophet in the Qur'ān quotation given above.

ham, seeing that the Torah and the Gospel were not sent down until after his time? Have you no understanding? Be content to argue about the things that you know. Why will you argue about matters that you know not in the least? Allah knows, whereas you do not know. Abraham was neither Jew nor Christian. He was a Hanīf (of pure, genuine faith), a Muslim, and not one who gives associates to Allah.'” The deputies from Najrān were not impressed by the theological demonstrations of Allah’s messenger. They also refused Muḥammad’s invitation to a cursing contest and elected to abide in their ancestral faith. So the prophet gave them a pact, guaranteeing that no bishop was to be removed from his bishopric, no monk from his monastery, no priest from his priesthood. Their authority and their rights were to remain uncurtailed. None of their customs was to be changed. Their churches and their crosses were to be undisturbed. All these privileges would be theirs as long as they conducted themselves righteously. A special prohibition of usury was written into the pact, according to Ibn Sa’d. “And whosoever takes usury from now on, for him my protection is void.”<sup>75</sup> The same writer adds the further stipulation, “Until Allah comes with his command.” However, it is said, these conditions may be later additions, added to justify ‘Umar’s expulsion of the Christians of Najrān during his caliphate. The tribute they had to pay annually consisted of the following items: Two thousand suits of clothing, each worth an ounce of gold, thirty cuirasses, thirty lances, thirty camels, thirty horses. There can be no question as to the genuineness of the treaty, since ‘Umar had to justify his expulsion of these Christians and since Abū

Sa’d, p. 26.

Bakr renewed the treaty, which he certainly could not have done, had there been no treaty.<sup>76</sup>

A little space must now be given to the consideration of the prophet's request to the Chosroes, the Emperor, the Negus, the Muqawqas of Egypt, and the Ghassanide prince to renounce their faith and embrace Islām.<sup>77</sup> According to Ibn Hishām,<sup>78</sup> the prophet sent messengers from amongst his companions to the kings and wrote to them, inviting them to Islām. After his frustrated pilgrimage he came to his followers and said: "Behold, Allah has sent me as a mercy, and my mission is to all. Do not you disagree as did the disciples of Jesus." Asked to be more specific, he replied that Jesus had purposed to do with his disciples the same that Muḥammad had in mind with reference to his followers. However, when Jesus sent one of his disciples into an adjacent country, the disciple was well pleased. But when a disciple was commissioned to go into a far country, his face fell. Then Jesus prayed to Allah and on the next morning every one of them spoke the language of the country to which he was assigned. So the messenger of Allah sent messengers and a letter to the kings and called them to Islām.

But this story finds little favor with modern scholars. Wellhausen says: "Erdichtet sind auch zwar nicht die Botschaften aber die Briefe an den Kaiser, den Kisra, den Ghassaniden, den Nagus, und den Muqauqis."<sup>79</sup> Vacca contends that the embassies never took place, but that they were invented to prove that these sovereigns had

<sup>76</sup> Ibn Sa'd, p. 77.

<sup>77</sup> Ibn Sa'd, Wellhausen, pp. 1-3; Al Ḥakam, *Futuḥ Misr*. Edited by Charles Torrey, New Haven, 1922, pp. 45-47.

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 971.

<sup>79</sup> Wellhausen, *Skizzen u. Vorarbeiten*, IV, p. 90.

been invited to Islām, that some of them had rejected the invitation, thus showing, in a certain sense, their hostility to Islām, while others, for instance the emperor Heraclius, had accepted the call of Allah's messenger, albeit only secretly, and for this reason had become vassals of the prophet.<sup>80</sup> Of course, if one holds that the messenger of Allah contented himself with being a prophet to the Arabs, and to the Arabs only, one must logically deny that Muḥammad ever thought of gaining adherents for his religion from among other peoples. But if we are content to accept certain plain Qur'ān passages as faithful expressions of the prophet's conception regarding the scope of his mission, we are under no necessity of finding it strange or impossible that Muḥammad would invite the potentates mentioned to the acceptance of Islām. Muḥammad had by this time come to regard himself as the "seal of the prophets"<sup>81</sup> and preached that his mission was to the entire human race. Wāqidī has a tradition to the effect that Muḥammad said on one occasion, "I am sent to all mankind, while every other prophet had a commission to his own people only."<sup>82</sup> Then, there is the record of the prophet's promise made to his followers during the siege of Abū Sufyān and his confederates. "Die Heuchler fuehrten das grosse Wort. Mu 'attib b. Qushair sagte: 'Er verspricht uns die Schaetze Kosru's und des Kaisers, und dabei kann niemand von uns in Sicherheit seine Notdurft verrichten.' Das war nach Calix b. Ga 'far von Ibn Ka'b die Antwort auf eine Prophezeiung, die Muhammed damals tat, um den Mut der Seinen zu

<sup>80</sup> Vacca, V. *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, Vol. X, p. 106.

<sup>81</sup> Sūra 33, 40.

<sup>82</sup> Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medina*, p. 405.

heben." Again, on the way to Tabūk Muḥammad told Bilāl that Allah had given him two treasures, the Persian and the Roman empire.<sup>83</sup> How firmly Muḥammad held the conviction that these two empires must succumb to Islām is further evidenced by the tradition which relates that even on his deathbed the prophet urged undertaking the expedition against the Byzantines.<sup>84</sup> Muir calls attention to the fact that "the ordinary copy of the letter to Heraclius contains a passage from the Coran which, as shown by Weil, was not given forth till the ninth year of the Hegira."<sup>85</sup> But that argument is in itself not of sufficient force to prove that the letters are false and worthless.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, other facts of the prophet's life that rest upon no more evidence than these embassies can allege for substantiation are accepted without question. And if one believes, as does Wellhausen, that the embassies actually took place, it ought not to be difficult to believe that these embassies also carried an invitation to Islām to their respective destinations, although the letters which have been preserved "are of very doubtful genuineness and the stories told regarding their reception by those to whom they were addressed are manifest fables."<sup>87</sup> Thus we have in this grandiose gesture of the prophet another, and a by no means despicable, proof of his universal out-

<sup>83</sup> Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medina*, p. 398.

<sup>84</sup> Id., p. 387.

<sup>85</sup> Muir, *Life of Mohammed*, p. 383, note.

<sup>86</sup> A text of the prophet's letter to the Muqawqas is found in the *Journal Asiatique* of 1854, p. 482 ff., in an article by M. Belin. The letter ends with Sūra 3, 57. It is possible that this word of the prophet was first used in his letters and later embodied in the Qur'ān.

<sup>87</sup> Bell, Richard. *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment*. London, Macmillan & Co., p. 112.

look. His field is the world. That Muḥammad regarded the matter in this light is evidenced by the suggestion made to the prophet of Madīna by a competitor in the prophetic dignity, Musailama, of the Banu Hanifa. He proposed to halve the world between Muḥammad and himself. But Muḥammad did not think well of the scheme. He wanted the world for himself and was not minded to share it with anyone.<sup>88</sup>

Muḥammad could not forget the defeat which the Christian Arabs and the Greeks had inflicted on his forces in the expedition to Mu'ta. The prophet-prince was thirsting for revenge. So he sent 'Usāma the son of Zaid to the place where his father had been killed in action.<sup>89</sup> 'Usāma intended to take Ubnā by surprise. Another Muslim, Buraida by name, asked 'Usāma whether a surprise attack were not contrary to the prophet's orders. The usual procedure was first to invite the enemies to accept Islām, or, refusing that, to pay jizya. 'Usāma replied that Muḥammad had indeed commanded Zaid to offer Islām to the enemy before entering upon actual hostilities, but that in this instance the prophet had given orders to proceed without such formalities, to surprise the enemy, if possible, and then to let fire and sword do their work in ruthless fashion. Now while this expedition was not carried out in the lifetime of the prophet, as the prophet died before 'Usāma could perform the task imposed on him by the messenger of Allah, it is interesting to observe that the rule for such expeditions of the faithful in the interest of the faith was to give the enemy—and an enemy was

<sup>88</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4. pp. 1737, 1749.

<sup>89</sup> Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medīna*, p. 433. Ibn Sa'd, II, 1. pp. 92, 136.



any non-Muslim, as for instance, the case of Ukaidir plainly shows—an opportunity to become a Muslim and be safe. In other words, an integral part of Muḥammad's missionary program was to regard a non-Muslim as ready and welcome mission material for Islām. But the message of the superior and final faith of Islām was not brought to the non-Muslim by a lone missionary who did nothing more than preach his message and await results. It was brought by an armed force, sent forth at the command of Allah and instructed to punish those refusing to submit to the rule of Islām, if they would not accept all the wide claims of Allah's messenger. As for the procedure observed toward pagan Arabs, the work of 'Alī in Yaman may serve as example. He was sent against the Madhij. As an introductory measure he took their women and children, and cattle as spoil. Then he gathered together whom he could and invited them to embrace the faith. When they refused he fought them, until he killed twenty of their number. Then he proposed Islām to the rest once more and they hastily accepted the faith which spared their lives.<sup>90</sup>

Such, then, was the practice of Muḥammad. In judging him we must not apply the standards of the twentieth century. Muḥammad was as tolerant towards the people of the Book as the people of the Book were tolerant toward each other. Certain it is that he was uncompromising toward the pagan Arabs, once he had sufficient power to assume such an attitude towards them. Certain it is that he was needlessly harsh in his treatment of the Jews of Madīna and Khaibar. But the former caused him much

<sup>90</sup> Ibn Sa'd. II, 1. p. 122. The prophet used extraordinary mildness towards them, because he wanted to win them for Islām.

trouble and vexation of spirit by their persistent and trenchant criticism of his exalted claims. We must not overlook that the Jews who learned wisdom from the painful experiences of their co-religionists were not further molested. It is likely that they all would have remained unmolested, if they had not roused his ire, but meekly submitted to the inevitable. Muḥammad did not know enough about tolerance to permit anyone to differ with him openly and aggressively. But we must also remember that Muḥammad, at least in his later years, regarded difference of religion as sufficient cause for attack. To proceed in this manner against people of another faith was good and wise because Muḥammad's God told him to adopt such a course of action. However, once the prophet had given a treaty, the people to whom the pact was given were not further molested, but were left to exercise the religion of their preference. In this respect Muḥammad was tolerant enough. He had done the will of Allah by calling them to Islām and, when people of the Book foolishly refused the light of Islām, had humbled them and made them pay *jizya*.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CALIPHS

ARNOLD says: "It is not in the cruelties of the persecutor or the fury of the fanatic that we should look for the evidence of the missionary spirit of Islam, any more than in the exploits of that mythical personage, the Muslim warrior with sword in one hand and Qur'an in the other."<sup>1</sup> He enlarges on this statement in the added note which reads: "This misinterpretation of the Muslim wars of conquest has arisen from the assumption that wars waged for the extension of Muslim domination over the lands of unbelievers that the aim in view was their conversion. Goldziher has well pointed out this distinction in his *Vorlesungen ueber den Islam*: 'Was Muhammed zunaechst in seinem eigenen arabischen Umkreise getan, das hinterlaesst er als Testament fuer die Zukunft seiner Gemeinde: Bekaempfung der Unglaeubigen, die Ausbreitung nicht so sehr des Glaubens als seiner Machtsphaere, die Machtsphaere Allahs ist. Es ist dabei den Kaempfern des Islams zunaechst nicht so sehr um Bekehrung, als Unterwerfung der Unglaeubigen zu tun.'"  
Again: "These stupendous conquests which laid the foundations of the Arab empire, were certainly not the outcome of a holy war, waged for the propagation of Islam, but they were followed by such vast defection from

<sup>1</sup> Arnold, T. W. *Preaching of Islam*, p. 5.

the Christian faith that this result has often been supposed to have been their aim. Thus the sword came to be looked upon by Christian historians as the instrument of Muslim propaganda, and in the light of the success attributed to it the evidences of the genuine missionary activity of Islam were obscured. But the spirit which animated the invading hosts of Arabs who poured over the confines of the Byzantine and Persian empires, was no proselytizing zeal for the conversion of souls. On the contrary, religious interests appear to have entered but little into the consciousness of the protagonists of the Arab armies. This expansion of the Arab race is more rightly envisaged as the migration of a vigorous and energetic people driven by hunger and want, to leave their inhospitable deserts and overrun the richer lands of their more fortunate neighbors.”<sup>2</sup> Arnold here reproduces, as he states, the views of Caetani.

It is no doubt true that many of the followers of the prophet who gladly flew to arms at the bidding of the caliphs had but little, if any, religious zeal. These early wars were to the majority of Arabs splendid opportunities to enrich themselves. It is also true that many defections from the Christian faith to Islām were not the immediate result of force, of military pressure. Nevertheless, in a certain sense these wars were “holy wars.” They were undertaken because commanded by Allah through his messenger. Islām is a theocracy. Allah personifies the authority of the state. The army and the public institutions are named after Allah. Allah’s executive, however, was the prophet. He alone knew Allah’s will. The prophet was not only the preacher of the truth, but also

<sup>2</sup> Arnold, *Preaching of Islam*, p. 46.

the only lawful sovereign on earth. Allah operates in and through all parts of the Muslim community. The administration of justice and the prosecution of war were functions equally as holy as public worship. The truth of these remarks is felt by Arnold, who in the following once more reproduces the opinion of Caetani. Arnold writes: "Still the unifying principle of the movement was the theocracy established in Medina, and the organisation of the new state proceeded from the devoted companions of Muḥammad, the faithful depositaries of his teaching, whose moral weight and enthusiasm kept Islam alive as the official religion, despite the indifference of those Arabs who gave it a mere nominal adherence."<sup>3</sup> But this is admitting that the inspiration of those early campaigns of Islām, as far as the real and sincere Muslims were concerned, was, after all, religious enthusiasm. Certainly Abu Bakr and 'Umar were actuated by religious motives. They knew that the messenger of Allah had said that Islām was to be preached to all, that they who did not accept it were to be humbled, but that the people they attacked should first be given an opportunity to accept the new faith. Thus these early campaigns cannot be absolved entirely from the censure that is justly given missionary endeavors of this sort. True, there was much other missionary endeavor also. But that is not to the point at present. The fact remains that Islām had inherited from its founder the task of winning the world for Muḥammad's faith, and not only for the extension of Muslim power. If the attacked chose to refuse the faith of the prophet and such refusal resulted in an enhancement of Allah's power and dominion here on earth, the Muslim state re-

<sup>3</sup> Arnold, *Preaching of Islam*, p. 47.

joiced over the advantage thus secured. Yet, devout Muslims rejoiced more over gains for the faith of Muḥammad than over the treasures of the life of this world secured in military campaigns.

*Abū Bakr*

If Muḥammad closed his eyes on a subjugated and outwardly loyal Arabia, his successor, Abu Bakr, faced a very different state of affairs. Shortly before his death Muḥammad had managed with adroitness acquired through practice to have 'Aswad, a rival prophet, put out of the way, so that "his affair stood as it was before," so that Yaman was again loyal.<sup>4</sup> But when the prophet's death became known, the Arabs fell away and rebellion waxed strong, one people imitating the behavior of the other.<sup>5</sup> In Yaman rebellion broke out afresh.<sup>6</sup> In the middle portion of the peninsula Musailama was successful in inciting the tribes around Yamāma to revolt.<sup>7</sup> In the north-east Tulaiḥa of the Banu 'Asad did not plead long nor in vain with his tribesmen for withdrawal from their allegiance to Allah and Islām.<sup>8</sup> But Muḥammad had said on his deathbed, "There shall not be two creeds in the peninsula." Such a statement from the prophet need occasion no surprise. It agrees thoroughly with his own practice and precepts. And Abū Bakr was not minded to brook rebellion and unbelief. Upon assuming the caliphate he had said: "The truthful is trusted, the liar suspected, the

<sup>4</sup> Tabari, I, 4, p. 1798.

<sup>5</sup> Tabari, I, 4, p. 1871.

<sup>6</sup> Tabari, I, 4, p. 1983.

<sup>7</sup> Tabari, I, 4, pp. 1795, 1797, 1781.

<sup>8</sup> Tabari, I, 4, p. 1871.

weak among you is strong with me, until I have secured justice for him, and the strong, weak, until I have exacted justice from him. A people does not abandon the holy war (Jihād) but Allah smites that people with vile-ness, and profligacy does not spread among a people but Allah gives them over to disaster. Obey me as you obeyed Allah and his messenger. If I have disobeyed Allah and his messenger, let me have no obedience from you. Rise for prayer, that Allah may have mercy on you.”<sup>9</sup> And the most urgent matter confronting the new caliph was the restoration of Islām among the revolted tribes. That was the will of Allah that must be done immediately. Neglecting it meant incurring the painful displeasure of Allah. Hence the caliph addressed himself to this most immediate need without delay. He wrote to the revolted tribes as follows: We will treat as an unbeliever whoever rejects Allah and Muḥammad, and we will make holy war upon him. I have sent So-and-so with an army and have given him orders to fight no one and kill no one, until he calls the people to prayer. Whoever obeys will not be troubled. But whoever refuses will be treated as an enemy. For such there is only the sword and fire and indiscriminate slaughter. Their women and children will be made prisoners. To obey is the better course. The disobedient will not foil Allah.<sup>10</sup> Thus it would not be Abū Bakr’s fault if the Muslims did not fight in the way of Allah and forestall the possibility of incurring Allah’s wrath for remissness in this item. It is well known that Abū Bakr succeeded in the course of a year in forcing the rebellious back into the fold. Musailama, the same

<sup>9</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 1014.

<sup>10</sup> Ṭabarī, I, 4, pp. 1883–84.

rival prophet, who had proposed dividing the world into two equal parts, leaving one for Muḥammad and retaining the other for himself, was killed in the battle of 'Aqraba. Khālid put to certain adherents of Musailama whom he had made prisoners the question, "O Banū Hanifa, what say you?" They answered, "You have a prophet, and we have a prophet." He put them to the sword.<sup>11</sup> Defeated in battle, Tulaiḥa fled to Syria and accepted Islām after the Ghatafān had returned to the Muslim household of faith. When he performed the pilgrimage, Abū Bakr was told that his former enemy was in the neighborhood of Madīna. The caliph refused to raise a hand against him and commanded that he should not be molested. When 'Umar was caliph, Tulaiḥa appeared to make his submission. 'Umar received him with sour mien and told him that because he had killed two certain Muslims, he would never love him. Tulaiḥa replied that 'Umar should not trouble himself about two men whom Allah had honored by his, Tulaiḥa's hand, that he should rather consider that Allah did not cause him to weep by their hand. Then the caliph received his allegiance.<sup>12</sup> The religious argument proved too strong to be resisted. The two Muslims whom Tulaiḥa had slain had become noble martyrs. Had Tulaiḥa been slain, he would have perished in his misdeeds.

How serious the Muslims were about re-establishing the true faith among the unfaithful tribes may be gathered from the treatment accorded to two poetesses of Yaman, one of whom had used her talents to satirise the messenger of Allah, while the other, under the inspiration of a less

<sup>11</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, pp. 1939-40.

<sup>12</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, p. 1898.



pretentious muse, had published verses making fun of the Muslims. Both had to suffer a severe penalty. Muhājir, Abu Bakr's general, had both of them deprived of a hand and an incisor. Abū Bakr, upon learning of his general's zeal, informed him that the lady who had reviled the prophet, had not been punished adequately. If Muhājir had not been beforehand, he would have given orders for her execution. "For the penalty for an offence against the prophet is not to be the same as the punishment meted out to one who ridicules a mere Muslim. He is a rebel, or, if a client, an enemy and a traitor." As for the other lady, the caliph's verdict was that, if she were a Muslim, she should be punished severely. But if the offender were a dhimmi,<sup>13</sup> the idolatry which they commit and which Muslims tolerate in them is a graver offence than ridiculing the Muslims. Had he punished her as fiercely as did his general, he would have considered himself liable to just reproach.<sup>14</sup>

These utterances of Abū Bakr throw a favorable light on the first caliph. It is easy enough to understand that satirising the prophet would be regarded as a heinous offence by pious Muslims, especially so shortly after his death. At the same time, we must not overlook the tolerant attitude taken with reference to dhimmis who were guilty of turning their wit to use against Muslims. For the meaning of the caliph's words about them is this: Since we permit dhimmis to commit the sin of giving associates to Allah, provided they remain otherwise within the limit of the pact which grants them tolerance, since we can endure their practicing idolatry,<sup>15</sup> a few jokes at

<sup>13</sup> Member of one of the protected cults.

<sup>14</sup> Tabari, I, 4, pp. 2014, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> According to Sūra 5, 76, Christians are idolaters.

our expense are a mere trifle compared to their great sin of idolatry. Hence, such inconsiderate, yet harmless behavior on the part of dhimmis ought not to provoke such violent punishment. In a word, such an offence should not be punished at all. For the greater offence, idolatry, goes unpunished.

As already stated, Abū Bakr had informed the faithful that, unless they fought in the way of Allah, they would forfeit Allah's favor. Evidently he was thoroughly convinced that Allah would reject the Muslims forevermore, if they did not prosecute the pious task of fighting in the way of Allah with becoming zeal and vigor. For, "when he had disposed of the affair with the apostates, he resolved to send armies into Syria. Accordingly he wrote to Muslims everywhere to prepare for Jihād, not forgetting to call attention to the wealth of the Greeks as a stimulous to their energy and devotion."<sup>16</sup> An item facilitating the invasion of Palestine was the refusal of the Emperor, who just at this time happened to be in great financial straits, to pay certain Arab tribes their annual subsidies, in consideration of which they were to protect the frontiers. The famished Arab hordes, disappointed and angered by this ill-timed economy of the Emperor, cast themselves into the arms of their fellow-nationals and so paved the way for an easy invasion of Syria by the Muslims.<sup>17</sup> De Goeje asserts that Abū Bakr invaded Syria for three reasons, namely, Muḥammad's program to spread Islām among all the Arabs, Muḥammad's desire that Islām rule the world, and the refusal of the Chosroes and the Emperor to accept Islām.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Balādhuri, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> Caetani, *Annali*, 2.2, p. 1112, quoting Theophanes.

<sup>18</sup> Caetani, *Annali*, 2.2, p. 1110.

Caetani denies every one of De Goeje's contentions. The Beduins, he writes, had but little understanding of the Muslim theocracy and for that reason could not be animated by zeal to sacrifice their lives for it. Furthermore, Muḥammad had no plans for world conquest, in fact, had left no program at all for the future development and expansion of Islām. He contends that even Abū Bakr did not at first purpose the conquest of Syria. He calls attention to a statement of al Ya'qubi, which says that Abū Bakr contemplated nothing more than a raid on Syria, and, hence, he could not have contemplated a complete conquest of that province. The Arabs regarded Syria as the paradise of the earth. For that reason they coveted it. The real objective of Khālīd's incursion into 'Irāq was Syria, which the Arabs wanted to possess for the reason given above. The invasion of Persia was of secondary importance, Syria was the real goal, therefore all expeditions met there.<sup>19</sup>

Muḥammad's views on Islām as a world religion as well as his pretentious program for conquest have already been given above and need not be repeated here. It is evident also that one isolated witness regarding Abū Bakr is not sufficient to cause the setting aside of the entire bulk of testimony to the contrary. For these reasons the opinion of De Goeje seems to us to reflect the facts in the case. As Balādhurī states, once the apostatized tribes had been brought back into the fold, the way was open for other military enterprises and Abū Bakr was not long in finding suitable and congenial employment for his Muslims warriors,<sup>20</sup> many of whom, no doubt, had little under-

<sup>19</sup> Caetani, *Annali*, 2.2, p. 1118.

<sup>20</sup> Balādhurī, p. 107.

standing for anything else beside the material advantages accruing to them from participation in these raids. So he sent forth the Muslims armies into 'Irāq and Syria, where the Muslims came into conflict with Christian Arabs. What complications an attack on these Arabs would provoke was thoroughly understood by the Muslims even before the prophet's death. One part of these Arab tribes owed allegiance to the Chosroes of Persia, the other was allied to the Byzantine Emperor. It is futile to suppose that a man of Abū Bakr's character and insight did not realise in any degree just what bearing such invasions would have. On the contrary, in undertaking the struggle for the expansion of Islām against these tribes Abū Bakr plainly manifested his intention to launch Islām upon a career of world conquest with the ultimate object of world dominion for Islām. And the combat thus undertaken was in a measure inspired and sustained by religious motives. When Abū Bakr sent Khālid into 'Irāq, he did so, "that the sword of Allah might again be unsheathed,"<sup>21</sup> that is, that the domain of Allah might be extended not only by the addition of territory and the increase of revenue, but also by augmenting the number of Muslims. And unless we must abandon the testimony of early Arab historians as entirely unreliable and worthless, unless we find in all their testimony merely the reflections and adjustments of a later age, skilful propaganda for the recognition of newly converted Muslims as of equal value with Muslims of long standing, and that at a time when there was really no adequate motive for such propaganda, we find enough of the missionary spirit of Islām, eager, determined, aggressive, in these early campaigns to uphold

<sup>21</sup> Muir. *The Caliphate*, Third Edition, London, p. 50.

the contention that the only aim and goal of these sanguinary military enterprises was not only the extension of the secular power of Islām, but was also, in great part, a vast effort for increasing the number of believers in Allah and his messenger. For world dominion of Islām becomes a fatuous dream and a futile aspiration without a continuous increase in the number of believers. An empire, such as Islām, a theocracy, relying for its preservation on military power, needed fighting men for its maintenance and extension. But the general rule of Islām was that only the arm of a believer was worthy to wield the sword in the cause of Allah. Hence we find that Islām, embarking upon its career of conquest, does not lose sight of the missionary element, and that, as part of its program of conquest.

Moreover, when non-Muslims refused the offer of Islām, provided they were people of the Book, they were compelled to endure political discrimination on account of their religious preferences and convictions. To assert that they were obliged to face the grim issue of Islām or the sword is neglecting the truth. But they did have to decide between Islām and political equality with the Muslims on the one hand and an inferior position in the theocracy of Muḥammad's founding as the price for the right to worship as they felt conscience-bound to do, on the other. In other words, early Islām almost unvaryingly visited a penalty upon those who for conscience's sake did not embrace the faith of the prophet. Yet, while this is undoubtedly true, it must needs be observed that, all things considered, the penalty thus inflicted was not unduly harsh nor offensively burdensome. In the early days of Islām there was little of wildly fanatical zeal and the dhimmis

were permitted to live their lives much the same as before they had come under Muslim rule, as long as they remained within the limits put upon them by their conquerors. In addition to all this, Muslim rule guaranteed the protection of dhimmis against aggression in consideration of their loyalty and obedience.

A few examples from the history of early Muslim conquest will, no doubt, exemplify the above statements. When Khālīd, "the Sword of Allah," in the course of his campaign in 'Irāq reached Hīra, he proposed three methods of procedure against them. They might accept Islām and be safe. Refusing Islām, they had the opportunity of accepting Muslim rule and paying jizya. Should they decline both these propositions, he would proceed to make war upon them. But Hīra was well fortified and the people of the town evidently were in no hurry to let Khālīd know what they intended to do. It was futile to try to carry the town by storm. So Khālīd ravaged the surrounding country, not sparing the monasteries of the vicinity. This latter measure induced the priests and the monks to urge the inhabitants of Hīra to yield to the inevitable, which they did. They informed the Muslim general that they would not enter into his religion, although in that case, as he had promised, their privileges would be the same as the rest of the Muslims, but that they would pay jizya. Khālīd was greatly vexed at their choice. Since they were Arabs, he was very desirous of having them in the fold of Islām and warned them that unbelief, in this case, Christianity, is a trackless desert and berated them for their folly in preferring a non-Arab to an Arab as their guide. But the people of Hīra refused to abandon their faith. The terms arranged were:

100,000 dirhams as jizya, the people of Hīra retain their churches and their fort, they agree to act as spies for the Arabs against the Persians.<sup>22</sup> According to Balādhuri there were at that time about six thousand men in Hīra. The same writer states that Hims had to pay 170,000 dīnārs, that they were to keep their churches, but that one part of the church of St. John was to be used as a mosque.<sup>23</sup>

Determined opposition to the invaders was punished with unusual severity, a procedure followed, by the way, not only by Muslims when angered by stubborn opposition. At 'Ain al-Tamr, a fortress on the border of the desert, Persian troops, supported by Arabs, refused the terms of Khālid. They were obliged to surrender at discretion. Khālid had their leaders beheaded in front of the city wall and gave orders for the execution of every adult male of the enemy forces. The women and children were sacrificed to the lust and greed of the soldiers. Forty youths had taken refuge in a near-by church, barring the door against the enemy, after all a futile precaution. Their lives were spared, since they were "students of the gospel," and they were distributed among the leaders of Khālid's army. They were not permitted to retain their faith. They had to accept the faith of the prophet. Two prominent men of Islām were descended from two of these unwilling converts to the religion of Allah, Ibn Ishāq, the historian, and Mūsa, conqueror of Spain.<sup>24</sup>

An incident illustrating the manner in which prominent

<sup>22</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, pp. 2019, 20, 2039, 2041.

<sup>23</sup> Balādhuri, p. 131.

<sup>24</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, pp. 2092-94.

Muslims of this time regarded the campaigns against the partes infidelium undertaken under the caliphate of Abu Bakr is the one recorded about 'Amr ibn al-'Āsī, whom the prophet had appointed governor of 'Umān. Abū Bakr wrote to him that he did not want to take him from a position of honor and influence to which he had been advanced by the prophet of Allah himself. Yet, if 'Amr did not object, he, Abū Bakr, would give him a position higher and more important than the one he occupied at present. Amr replied: "I am one of the arrows of Islām, and thou, after Allah, the marksman, who gathers them and shoots them at the enemy. Choose the strongest, hardest, best, and use them as you see fit."<sup>25</sup> Now such remarks seem to indicate that the wars waged by Muslims were holy wars. They were, according to the belief of these stern heroes of Islām, Allah's business. They were the way of Allah, in which a believer must exert himself to give proof of the depth and sincerity of his belief. Plainly, Muḥamad had not preached and labored in vain.

To Hormuz, the satrap of the Delta, Khālīd wrote: "Become a Muslim and thou art safe. Otherwise, take a dhimmi's covenant and pay jizya. If you refuse these terms, you will have none but yourself to blame for what happens. For I am come against you with a people that loves death as you love life."<sup>26</sup> One cannot fail to find a religious consideration, a missionary element in these statements. Acceptance of the faith insured safety. Refusal to accept the faith brought punishment. Such procedure is right and good because it is the way of Allah.

Of like tenor and import is the letter this general wrote

<sup>25</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, p. 2082.

<sup>26</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, p. 2022.



to Madā'in. "Whoever prays our prayer, accepts our qibla, and eats our sacrifice, the same is a Muslim, sharing our privileges and shouldering our duties. When our letter reaches you, send pledges and receive the pact of dhimmis. Otherwise, by him beside whom there is no other God, I will send upon you a people that loves death as you love life."<sup>27</sup>

*'Umar Ibn al-Khattāb*

Before the battle of Qadisiyya Yazdegerd was given an opportunity to become a Muslim. He was told that Allah had sent a messenger to the Arabs and that this messenger at Allah's behest had promised them the goods of this world and of the next. They had all come to realise the grace that Allah had bestowed on them in giving them Muḥammad through the evident and palpable results achieved up till now. They were but following the prophet's command in attacking the Persians. Hence they invited him to the faith, before proceeding to hostilities. If he would accept the faith, there would be no bloodshed. But if he refused to accept the faith there remained only the alternative of jizya or the sword.<sup>28</sup>

In an interview between Rustam and al-Mughīra and other Arab spokesmen the following words, or statements of this effect are supposed to have been exchanged. Rustam said: "I have learned that you are forced to undertake this war through poverty. I will give you money and goods if you will leave the country." He also remarked that ere this the Arabs had been weak, wasting the little

<sup>27</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, p. 2020.

<sup>28</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4, pp. 2239-40.

strength they had in fighting each other. The Arab spokesmen replied that it was not a case of scanty food obtained through rigorous toil with them. Allah had sent them a prophet and through following him they were made prosperous. Their prophet had ordered them to fight against those of another faith than Islām, until they pay jizya and are humbled. Moreover, Allah had promised them that they were destined to rule over all that would not accept their faith. Thus Rustam must realise that if he will not become a Muslim or if he refuses to pay jizya, he will have to fight.<sup>29</sup>

After a siege of seventy days, or, according to Balādhurī, of four months, Damascus fell into Muslim hands. The vigilant Khālīd, who neither slept nor let sleep, was greatly helped in his endeavors to take Damascus by the bishop of the city, who had no scruples about assisting the besiegers because the Muslim general promised exceedingly fair terms for the city in consideration of the bishop's generous aid, which took the form of supplies for the invading army. Also, the same church dignitary informed the ever ready Khālīd of a great celebration to be held on a certain night by the inhabitants of Damascus. So it happened that while the city was given over to revelry, Khālīd, instructed by the bishop how to get into the city, took the feasting populace by surprise and succeeded in his enterprise.<sup>30</sup> Caetani remarks that the bishop spared his townsmen much suffering and secured very favorable terms.<sup>31</sup> Be that as it may, the terms obtained were fair in every respect. The people

<sup>29</sup> Tabarī, I, 5, pp. 2267, 2284; Balādhurī, pp. 256, 7.

<sup>30</sup> Tabarī, I, 4, p. 2152; Balādhurī, p. 121, 2.

<sup>31</sup> Caetani, *Annales*, 31, p. 364.

were not molested. Their churches remained in their possession. Their houses were not taken from them. The walls of the city were not torn down. Nothing is said about compelling the people to surrender half of their churches and abandoning half of their houses to the conquerors. However, when Damascus was invested by the Muslim army, many of its inhabitants fled to Heraclius, who was at Antioch at the time. The dwellings thus vacated by the adherents of the Emperor were occupied by the Muslims.<sup>32</sup>

The poll tax, which at first had been a *dīnār* per every able-bodied male, was later changed by 'Umar ibn al-Khattab to four *dīnārs* per head for those who had gold and forty *dirhams* per head for those who had silver, a measure which means nothing else than that 'Umar graduated the tax according to the wealth of the individual.<sup>33</sup> In addition to this, the people of Syria and the Peninsula had to pay monthly two *modii* of wheat and three *qists* of oil and an unspecified amount of grease and honey for every Muslim soldier.<sup>34</sup>

It is usually said that the basilica of St. John, the most beautiful Christian church in Syria, was equally divided between Muslims and Christians and that the adherents of both cults worshipped in it for a number of years. The case of the church at Hims has already been cited. Gottheil quotes two other instances of the same kind, one at al-Anbar, the other at Cordova.<sup>35</sup> These well-attested cases suffice to prove that such divisions were actually

<sup>32</sup> Balādhurī, p. 123.

<sup>33</sup> Balādhurī, p. 124; Al-Hakam, p. 152.

<sup>34</sup> Balādhurī, p. 125.

<sup>35</sup> Gottheil, Richard J. H. *Dhimmi and Moslems in Egypt*. Chicago University Press, p. 335.

made. However, it is doubtful in the extreme whether a similar arrangement obtained in Damascus regarding the cathedral of St. John. Balādhurī says that Mu'āwiyā ibn-abi-Sufyān wanted to add the church of St. John to the mosque. The Christians objected and the caliph desisted from his purpose. 'Abd-al-Malik ibn-Marwān sought in his day to add it to the mosque, offering the Christians money for their church, but they refused his offer. Al-Walid ibn-'Abd al-Malik tore down the church and "made it enter into" the mosque. Upon the complaint of the Christians 'Umar ibn 'Abd-al-Aziz ordered that that part of the church which had been added to the mosque should be restored to the Christians.<sup>36</sup> "And there was at the side of the mosque a church which had remained in Christian hands, the which Walid destroyed when he built his great mosque," writes Abu-l-Fida.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Caetani quotes the testimony of Arculfus, a Christian pilgrim, to the effect that the basilica of St. John was entirely in Christian hands at the time of Mu'āwiyā.<sup>38</sup> Then there is the inscription of the mosque which runs: "Al-Walid ordered the building of this mosque and the destruction of the church which was in it." Evidently it is difficult to ascertain precisely what was the relative position of mosque and church respectively. Yet, this much is clear that the cathedral itself was not divided into two equal parts between conquerors and conquered. The church is always spoken of as an adjoining building, as a building contiguous to the mosque. The

<sup>36</sup> Balādhurī, p. 125.

<sup>37</sup> *Annales Moslemici*. *Edidit* J. J. Reiske. Hafniae, 1789, I, p. 432.

<sup>38</sup> Caetani, *Annales*, 31, p. 347.

basilica was eventually taken away from the Christians by al-Walid, but 'Umar ibn Abd-al-'Aziz gave them several suburban churches to indemnify them for their loss.

Upon his accession to the caliphate 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb had promised to execute impartial justice. He said: "By Allah, none is stronger with me than the weak, until I have secured justice for him, and none is weaker with me than the strong, until I have exacted justice from him."<sup>39</sup> It is well known that he meant precisely what he said. An exhibition of his fairness is found in his visit to Jerusalem. The Arab army had vainly besieged the Holy City all through the winter of 636-7. The defenders of the city, disappointed in their expectation of imperial aid and convinced of their inability to hold out against the Muslims any longer, decided to surrender. However, the aged patriarch, Sophronius, stipulated that surrender was contingent upon the fulfilment of one condition, viz., that 'Umar come in person to settle the terms of surrender.<sup>40</sup> A legend preserved by the Arabs relates that Aretion, commander of Jerusalem, claimed to have read somewhere an ancient prophecy to the effect that Jerusalem would be taken by a conqueror whose name consisted of three letters, a condition which 'Amr's name failed to fulfil, but which was met by the caliph's name. No doubt this little story merely shows the esteem in which 'Umar's fairness was held. The patriarch preferred to deal with the caliph himself rather than with any of his generals. At any rate, 'Umar heeded the petition of the patriarch and set out from Madīna at once. Either at Jābia or near that place 'Umar met the representatives

<sup>39</sup> Abu-l-Fida, I, p. 222.

<sup>40</sup> Balādhuri, pp. 214-5.

of the patriarch and a treaty was written for Jerusalem, which was now invested by Muslim soldiers. When the caliph came to the city, he refused, it is said, to offer up prayer in several Christian churches placed at his disposal. He refused to avail himself of the offers thus made, giving as his reason that, once he had performed his devotions in a Christian church, it would no longer remain a church, but become a mosque. With reference to the church of the Nativity he ordered that only one Muslim at a time should visit it, but this arrangement was set aside later on and a mosque was erected in the place of the church of the Nativity.<sup>41</sup>

The treaty of Jerusalem, drawn by 'Umar himself, may well be set down here as proof that the caliph did not go to unnecessary or unwarranted lengths. It reads, according to Tabarī: "This is the covenant which Umar, the servant of Allah, commander of the faithful, gave to the people of Ailia. He granted them safety for their persons, their possessions, their churches, and their crosses, their sick and their well, and the rest of the members of their religion. Their churches shall not be inhabited, nor torn down, nor diminished in the least, nor shall their crosses be touched, nor any other possession of theirs. They shall not be compelled against their religion, nor shall any of them be molested. No Jew shall live with them in Ailia. And the people of Ailia shall pay jizya as it is customary in the cities. It is incumbent upon them that they drive out from their city the Romans and the brigands. Whoever leaves the city (imperial sympathizers) shall be safe in his person and his property until he reaches his destination. Whoever remains shall receive

<sup>41</sup> Muir, *Caliphate*, p. 147.

the same treatment as the people of Ailia. And whoever of the people of the country was in the city before the battle and wishes to settle in the city, the same obligations of jizya are upon him as on the people of Ailia. And whoever wants to go to the territory of the Romans and whoever wants to return to his people, he may go. Nothing shall be taken from the people to whom this treaty is given until the harvest has been gathered in. The terms of this treaty are guaranteed by the pledge of Allah, the protection of his messenger, and the protection of the caliphs and of the faithful, as long as they (to whom the treaty is given) pay jizya.”<sup>42</sup>

Bearing in mind that the Muslims are the conquerors and that they are all but uncivilized, it looks as though they had employed considerable moderation in dealing with those whom they subjugated. That the Jews are forbidden to remain in or return to Jerusalem is undoubtedly due to the Christians' desire to be rid of them. There can have been but few Jews at Jerusalem at this time. “Shortly after the triumphal exaltation of the Cross at Jerusalem, when the order went forth to banish or slay all Jews, all who had warning in time fled to the desert beyond Jordan, there to tarry a change of fortune. As at length they saw the advancing banners of Islām, they welcomed the hosts that came as enemies of the Roman Empire.”<sup>43</sup> Thus their hopes to re-establish themselves in Jerusalem came to nothing. Evidently the spirit which had animated his master against the Jews controlled the second caliph also. Otherwise it is hard to explain why he yielded to the demand of the Christians that the Jews

<sup>42</sup> Tabari, I, 5, p. 2406.

<sup>43</sup> Butler, Alfred J. *Arab Conquest of Egypt*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1902, p. 159.

be forbidden the Holy City. But the feeling of the Christians against the Jews was not entirely without motive. During the Persian war the Jews had sided with the Persians wholeheartedly, and the Persians had made indiscriminate slaughter among the Christians.<sup>44</sup> But previous to that, Heraclius had systematically persecuted the Jews.

The successes of the Muslims against the Byzantines in Syria and Palestine encouraged them to further undertakings against them. Heraclius, realising the utter hopelessness of the imperial cause in Syria, had bidden that rich province a long farewell and had left for Constantinople.<sup>45</sup> But the measure of his sorrow was not yet full and another grievous loss was soon experienced by the Byzantine Empire. As in so uncomfortably many instances of this kind the reports of Arabic historians are not at all in harmony about the inception of Muslim activities with regard to Egypt. According to al-Ḥakam, 'Amr ibn al- 'Āsī met 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb at Jābia A.H. 18 and told him about the desirability of garnering in Egypt for Islām, eloquently enlarging upon the ease with which that rich province might be annexed. He experienced considerable difficulty in winning the caliph over to his point of view. Finally 'Umar yielded, but with much reluctance, instructing his general to this effect: "If you get orders prohibiting you to proceed against Egypt, leave it alone, provided my message reaches you before you have set foot on Egyptian soil. But in case you are already in Egypt, when my letter reaches you, continue

<sup>44</sup> Michel Syrien. *Chronique*. Edited by J. C. Chabot. Paris, 1910, Vol. II, p. 410.

<sup>45</sup> He said, "Peace be unto thee, O Syria," and, "This is an excellent province for the enemy," referring to its abundant pastures. Balādhuri, p. 137.



on your way and implore Allah's aid." 'Amr left under the cover of night in order that the caliph might not have an opportunity to change his mind and cancel the proposed invasion, while the general was still at hand. 'Umar, learning of 'Amr's move, at once sent a messenger after him, forbidding him to proceed, if he had not yet entered Egypt. When 'Umar's messenger arrived 'Amr delayed opening the caliph's letter, until he had penetrated into Egypt. The letter repeated the verbal instructions 'Umar had given, viz., that if 'Amr were already in Egypt, when the letter arrived, he should pursue his way, trusting in Allah to prosper him in his undertaking.<sup>46</sup> Another version informs us that 'Amr undertook the conquest of Egypt on his own initiative, leaving his son in command at Caesarea, where he happened to be at the time. 'Umar was greatly annoyed at his general's high-handed behavior and ordered him to return at once, if he had not crossed the Egyptian border when the caliph's letter reached him. 'Amr received the messenger at al-'Arīsh, a place of which he was assured that it belonged to Egypt. Finally there is the report that 'Umar wrote to 'Amr, while the latter was besieging Caesarea, and ordered him to carry the standards of Islām into Egypt.<sup>47</sup>

But if the beginnings of the Egyptian conquest are somewhat obscure, the results achieved by the Muslims in their Egyptian adventure are by no means uncertain. One can hardly doubt that the Muslims knew full well that the Copts, whom the orthodox Emperor had persecuted through Cyrus, patriarch of Alexandria, would not exert themselves in behalf of the government that had used them

<sup>46</sup> Al-Ḥakam, pp. 56-57.

<sup>47</sup> Balādhuri, p. 212.

so ill. It is also beyond doubt that, if they regarded Syria as a paradise on earth, they had no objection whatever to adding other possessions that would make their lives still more enjoyable. At any rate, the Muslims must have known that the people of Egypt had no loyalty for the Emperor and that it would be an easy matter to conquer Egypt with its vast riches. The Emperor again and again had turned a deaf ear to the pitiful complaints of the harassed Monophysites both in Syria and Egypt. The apt description of Michael the Elder about the sentiment of the people in Syria accurately reproduces the convictions and feelings of the majority of the people in Egypt with reference to the Emperor on the one hand and the Muslims on the other. He writes that when Heraclius was unsuccessful in his efforts to convert the Jacobite bishops of Syria to his formula that Christ performed all His works with one divine-human will and operation, he ordered a violent persecution of all who refused allegiance to the formula of Chalcedon. The noses and ears of the recalcitrant were to be cut off and their homes given over to pillage. This brutal order was carried out, the persecution lasting a long time. A large number of churches was taken away from the Jacobites and given to the adherents of the imperial theology. "Heraclius did not permit the orthodox (Jacobites) to appear before him and did not consider their complaints about the churches which had been stolen from them. For this reason the God of vengeance, who alone is almighty, who changes the rule over man as he sees fit, gives it to whom he will and exalts the humblest, seeing the wickedness of the Romans (Byzantines), who cruelly pillaged our churches and our monasteries and condemned us without pity, led up the

sons of Ishmael from the south to deliver us through them from the Romans. And though indeed we have sustained some losses because the churches which had been taken from us and given to the Chalcedonians remained in their hands, since, when the cities submitted to the Arabs, the latter gave to each confession the churches which they found in its possession, nevertheless, it was not a small advantage for us to be delivered from the cruelty of the Romans, their wickedness, their anger, their violent zeal toward us, and to find ourselves enjoying peace.”<sup>48</sup> John of Nikiou also regards the victories of the Muslims over the Byzantines as a divine punishment, sent upon them for their persecution of the Monophysites in Egypt. “God, the Guardian of justice, did not neglect the world, but avenged those who had been wronged: He had no mercy on such as had dealt treacherously against Him, but He delivered them up into the hands of the Ishmaelites.”<sup>49</sup>

Under such circumstances loyalty to the Emperor was out of the question. Some of the Egyptians embraced Islām with great alacrity. John of Nikiou writes of “Egyptians, who had apostatized from the Christian faith and embraced the faith of the beast,” assisting the Muslims in conquering Egypt.<sup>50</sup> Al-Ḥakam informs us that the Coptic bishop of Alexandria, Benjamin, on hearing of the irruption of the Arabs, predicted the overthrow of the Greeks and urged the Copts to help the Arabs, which they did.<sup>51</sup> The terms proposed to the messengers of the Muqawqas by ‘Amr were three. First, the Egyptians should

<sup>48</sup> Michel Syrien, II, pp. 412-13.

<sup>49</sup> Nikiu, John of. By R. H. Charles. London, Williams and Norgate, 1916, p. 186.

<sup>50</sup> John of Nikiu, p. 182.

<sup>51</sup> Al-Ḥakam, pp. 58-9.

become Muslims and be brothers of the faithful, enjoying all their privileges; second, refusing the offer of Islām, they should give *jizya* with their own hands and be humbled;<sup>52</sup> third, if they were unwilling to do that, "we will make war upon you patiently, until Allah decides between us."<sup>53</sup> When Egypt had been conquered 'Amr stipulated that each and every able bodied man was to pay two *dīnārs*. The number of able bodied men amounted to 8,000,000. Those that wished to leave Egypt for Constantinople were permitted to do so.<sup>54</sup> Evidently the tax of two *dīnārs* was not merely an assessment made by way of a fine to be paid only once, for al-Ḥakam distinctly states that this was to be an annual tax. 'Umar confirmed this arrangement and stated that this tax was not to be levied on those upon whom the razor had not come, nor upon women and children, nor, according to one reading, upon monks. In his letter to 'Amr 'Umar adds the condition that the people of the treaty are not permitted to resemble the Muslims in their garb. Other conditions were that every man had to pay one *irdab* of wheat per month, a quantity of grease and honey, and was obliged to be host to a Muslim for three nights.<sup>55</sup> Balād-hurī gives a somewhat different account of the terms imposed on the people of Egypt. He says that the people of Egypt had to pay a poll tax of two *dīnārs*. In addition to this every landowner had to furnish the Muslims three *irdabs* of wheat, two *qists* of oil, two *qists* of honey, and two *qists* of vinegar, and a suit of clothes and a pair of

<sup>52</sup> Sūra 9, 29.

<sup>53</sup> Al-Ḥakam, p. 65.

<sup>54</sup> Al-Ḥakam, pp. 70-72; p. 87.

<sup>55</sup> Al-Ḥakam, pp. 151-2.

shoes for every Muslim; and that annually. As long as the dhimmis in Egypt comply with these terms, their women and children would neither be sold nor taken as captives, and their possessions would remain untouched. 'Umar endorsed the document setting forth these terms.<sup>56</sup>

After the second capture of Alexandria "by force, without pact or covenant" the soldiers wanted the city divided as spoil. But 'Umar forbade it, "in order that its taxes may be state property for the Muslims and a source of strength to carry on war against their enemies."<sup>57</sup> Al-Ḥakam declares that Alexandria was not included in the treaty of Egypt, because it had been taken by force. The people of Alexandria were to pay kharāj and jizya according to the judgment of the governor.<sup>58</sup>

Prisoners made during the conquest of Egypt in such towns as offered resistance to the Muslims were put before the choice of Islām or Christianity. Those refusing Islām were sent to Madīna, but 'Umar ordered that they should return to their homes, since they had not violated their pact.<sup>59</sup> Ṭabarī gives a fuller and somewhat different account of this matter. The commander of Alexandria offered to pay jizya on the condition that 'Amr release the prisoners he had made in Egypt. The Muslim general pointed out that the caliph would have to decide that matter. However, if the Byzantines would agree to suspend hostilities he would refer the case to 'Umar. The commander of Alexandria agreed to Amr's condition. 'Umar replied: "Give him terms of jizya with the assur-

<sup>56</sup> Balādhurī, pp. 214-5.

<sup>57</sup> Al-Ḥakam, pp. 80, 82.

<sup>58</sup> Al-Ḥakam, pp. 83-4.

<sup>59</sup> Al-Ḥakam, pp. 83, 86.

ance that you will keep alive the prisoners that are in your hands, both those that have embraced Islām and those that remained Christians. Whoever chooses Islām belongs to the Muslims, sharing their privileges and obligations. Whoever prefers the religion of his people must pay jizya as prescribed for his people. As for the prisoners that have already reached Makka, or Madina, or Yaman, we cannot return them and we will not bind ourselves to a condition we cannot carry out." 'Amr informed the commander of Alexandria accordingly. The prisoners he made were always placed before the alternative of Islām or Christianity. When a prisoner chose Islām the Muslims broke forth in a Takbīr stronger than that which they uttered at the taking of a village. But if one chose Christianity, the Christians were elated, while the Muslims were grieved just as though a Muslim had gone over into the camp of the Christians. Probably the two accounts can be harmonized on the assumption that 'Umar refused to return such of the prisoners as had embraced Islām.<sup>60</sup>

That the Muslims did not always deal fairly and equitably in the course of their progress in Egypt is attested by John of Nikiou. He writes: "When the Moslem, accompanied by the Egyptians who had apostatized from the Christian faith and embraced the faith of the beast, had come up, the Moslem took as booty all the possessions of the Christians who had fled, and they designated the servants of Christ the enemies of God."<sup>61</sup> "These Ishmaelites came and slew without mercy the commander of the troops and all his companions. And forthwith they compelled the city to open its gates, and they put to the

<sup>60</sup> Tabarī, I, 5, pp. 2582-3.

<sup>61</sup> John of Nikiou, p. 182.

sword all that surrendered, and they spared none, whether old men, babe, or woman.”<sup>62</sup> At Nakius (Nikiou) the soldiers, learning that their commander had fled, grew panicky and leaped into the river, where the Muslims slaughtered them. “Thereupon the Moslem made their entry into Nakius, and took possession, and finding no soldiers (to offer resistance), they proceeded to put to the sword all whom they found in the streets and in the churches, men, women, and infants, and they showed mercy to none. And after they had captured (this) city, they marched against other localities and sacked them and put all they found to the sword. And they came also to the city of Sa, and there they found Esqutaws and his people in a vineyard, and the Moslem seized them and put them to the sword. Now these were of the family of the general Theodore. Let us now cease, for it is impossible to recount the iniquities perpetrated by the Moslem after their capture of the island of Nakius.”<sup>63</sup> The good bishop of Nikiou evidently supplies facts omitted by Muslim historians. His testimony is earlier than that of any Muslim, since he was born at the time of the Arab invasion. Also, it is impartial, for he does not fail to give credit to the Muslims when it is due them. “‘Amr took none of the property of the churches, and he committed no act of spoliation or plunder, and he preserved them throughout all his days.”<sup>64</sup>

A few words must now be added about ‘Umar’s treatment of the Christians of Najrān and the Jews of Khairbar. According to Wāqidi, who reproduces al-Zuhri in

<sup>62</sup> John of Nikiou, p. 179.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

this case, the prophet ordered nothing on his deathbed with the exception of a trifling matter concerning the distribution of the dates of Khaibar, insisted that the march against the Greeks be undertaken, and commanded that there should not be two religions in Arabia.<sup>65</sup> According to Ibn Sa'd, the prophet gave direction about three things shortly before he died, one of them being the expulsion of the unbelievers, that is, Jews and Christians, from the Arabian peninsula.<sup>66</sup> Al-Buḥārī also relates that the prophet on his death-bed said: "Drive the unbelievers out of the Arabian peninsula."<sup>67</sup> In the Kitāb al-Muwatta' of Malik the same tradition appears in the following form: "Two religions cannot exist together in Arabia." Another version of the same tradition reads: "Drive the Jews from the Hijāz and the people of Najrān from the peninsula of the Arabs."<sup>68</sup> Two traditions ascribe to 'Umar the resolve to carry out the prophet's last request. One is: "Truly, I will expel the Jews and the Christians from the Arabian peninsula, until I have left none but Muslims there." The other reports 'Umar speaking thus: "If I live I will drive out, Allah willing, the Jews and the Christians from the Arabian peninsula."<sup>69</sup> Now there is not the slightest doubt that these traditions are open to attack. Gottheil calls attention to the fact that "even in his testament, which has come down to us in two recensions, 'Umar is careful to demand consideration for the dhimmis. 'I recommend to your care the dhimmis,

<sup>65</sup> Wellhausen. *Muhammed in Medina*, p. 403.

<sup>66</sup> Ibn Sa'd, II, 2, Herausgegeben von F. Schwally. Leiden, 1912, pp. 36-7.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Buḥārī. Edited by Charles C. Torrey. Leiden, 1906, p. 57.

<sup>68</sup> Gottheil, *Dhimmis and Moslems*, pp. 353-358.

<sup>69</sup> Gottheil, L. c.



for they enjoy the protection of the prophet; see that the agreement with them is kept, and that no greater burdens than they can carry are laid upon them.'"<sup>70</sup> Another difficulty is this that according to Ibn Hishām " 'Umar heard, the prophet had said, Two religions shall not be found in the peninsula of the Arabs." 'Umar then took time to investigate the matter and found that the prophet had made such a statement, whereupon he proceeded to drive the Jews out of Khaibar.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, when 'Umar expelled the Jews of Khaibar and the Christians of Najrān, other reasons are alleged than merely the will of the prophet, which was to the Muslims the will of Allah. Yet it seems to us that all these difficulties are not of sufficient force to set aside the numerous reports concerning this last will and testament of Allah's messenger.

The concern of 'Umar for the dhimmis is not necessarily prompted by deep interest in their welfare. The emphasis may quite as justly be placed on the interest which the caliph had in carrying out the wishes of the prophet, to whom he was devoted with all his heart. 'Umar held every word the prophet has spoken in unbelievably high regard. Whatever the prophet had said was good and right, even though 'Umar's judgment told him otherwise. He looked at the black stone of the Ka'ba and said: "By Allah, I know that thou art only a stone and canst grant no benefit, canst do no harm. If I had not known that the prophet had kissed thee, I would not have done it, but on account of that I do it."<sup>72</sup> A man

<sup>70</sup> Gottheil, *Dhimmi and Moslems*, p. 358.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 779.

<sup>72</sup> Shedd, Wm. A. *Islam and the Oriental Churches*. Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1904, p. 13.

so thoroughly devoted to the prophet would, naturally, carry out the slightest wish of his leader, would for that reason also urge proper treatment of the dhimmis, 'proper' being in his case such treatment as the prophet had prescribed. The statement of Ibn Hishām according to which 'Umar must first make sure that the prophet had actually said, the Christians of Najrān and the Jews of Khaibar should be expelled does not necessarily contradict the report of Ibn Sa'd, who tells us that when Muḥammad died 'Umar was present and that he must have known what the prophet had said on his deathbed. The same writer gives us a clue as to 'Umar's frame of mind at the time. "Umar said: What of that and that city of Rome? The prophet will not die, until we have taken them. And if he dies, we will see him as the children of Israel saw Moses." <sup>73</sup> Evidently 'Umar was not prepared to believe in the possibility of the prophet's permanent removal from his people. That this was in his mind is clearly stated by Ibn Hishām. "'Umar said: 'Some of the hypocrites say that the messenger of Allah is dead. By Allah, the messenger of Allah did not die. He went to his Lord in the same way that Moses did. He was gone forty days and came back, though people said that he had died.'" He threatened to cut off the hands and feet of those who doubted his words. Nor did he change his mind, until Abū Bakr called his attention to Sūra 3, 138, which plainly states that the prophet was mortal.<sup>74</sup> It is evident that a man in 'Umar's frame of mind might readily overhear what the prophet said, especially with all the stir and confusion which, according to the historians, at-

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Sa'd, II, 2, p. 37.

<sup>74</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 1012; Ibn Sa'd, II, 2, pp. 53-57.

tended the prophet's last moments.<sup>75</sup> Thus he would be obliged to investigate the assertion that the prophet had ordered the expulsion of the people in question. And that would comport nicely with his regard for the prophet's plighted word to the dhimmis. On this assumption the mention of special provocation driving 'Umar on to the expulsion of the Najrānian Christians and the Jews of Khaibar would also be understandable. Finally, the arguments that both Christians and Jews remained within the peninsula is not conclusive to the extent of invalidating all other testimony. First of all, the peninsula of Muḥammad was of much smaller extent than the territory we designate thus today. According to al-Buḥārī the peninsula meant Makka and Madīna and Yamāma and Yaman.<sup>76</sup> That there were both Jews and Christians in this specified territory at later times need in no wise be brought into connection with the present matter. It is evident, then, that there is no valid reason for rejecting the traditions which ascribe an utterance of the kind given above to Muḥammad as entirely without foundation in fact. However, even though one insists that these and similar traditions are quite unreliable and therefore useless as history, we must not forget that even without such statements on the prophet's part 'Umar, working along the lines of Islāmic development, unremitting in his zeal to protect the religion of the prophet with the military power of Islām, would probably have come to the conclusion that the safety of the Islāmic state imperatively demanded the expulsion of these people. In a word, he would only be walking in ways into which the spirit of

<sup>75</sup> Ibn Sa'd, II, 2, pp. 36, 37.

<sup>76</sup> Al-Buḥārī, Ed. Torrey, p. 57.

his master was leading him. If these people were a menace to the Islāmic state, they were for that very reason also a peril to the faith of Islām. What the prophet would have done under such circumstances is not, or need not be, a matter of surmise. Under such circumstances there was not sufficient room in the peninsula of the Arabs for two religions. As for 'Umar and the Najrānians, Ibn Sa'd expressly declares that he feared them on account of Islām.<sup>77</sup>

It has already been stated that in both instances special reasons are alleged by the historians for the expulsion commanded by 'Umar. In the case of the Christians of Najrān the charge brought against them was that they had practiced usury. We recall that when the Najrānians received their treaty from Muḥammad, the prophet stipulated that the practice of usury should cease and that his obligation ceased as soon as this condition was ignored. Moreover, this covenant should be in force "until Allah comes with his command." Evidently both the Christians of Najrān as well as the Muslims regarded the agreement made by the prophet as a personal arrangement between the prophet and the Christians. For on the death of Muḥammad they sought a new pact from Abū Bakr and obtained one, but with "the exception made by Muḥammad, the messenger of Allah, at Allah's command with regard to their land and the country of the Arabs, that there should not dwell in it two religions. Barring that, he gave them protection for their religion and their possessions."<sup>78</sup> But, as already stated, 'Umar feared for the safety of Islām, accused them of usury, and expelled them.

<sup>77</sup> Welhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, IV, Ibn Sa'd, p. 67.

<sup>78</sup> Tabarī, I, 4. pp. 1987-8.

In the words of Ṭabari: " 'Umar sent Ya'la b. 'Ummay to Yaman and commanded him to expel the people of Najrān on account of the request made the prophet during his illness and on account of the request made by Abū Bakr during his illness. He said: 'Go to them, but do not <sup>79</sup> seduce them from their religion. Then exile all that remain steadfast in their faith, but let the Muslims remain. Then let them choose a country and let them know that we banish them at the command of Allah and his messenger, which is, that there shall not be two religions in the peninsula and that he that remains in his religions shall be expelled. Then we will give them land like their land and also give them our protection.' " <sup>80</sup> It is impossible to say whether the charge of usury brought against the Christians of Najrān rests on fact. Lammens denies that it does and finds the occasion which led to the expulsion in the fact that the Christians of Najrān controlled the financial market of central Arabia and that this superiority in money matters caused the charge of usury. He says with fine sarcasm of this charge: "Insinuation sournoise pour légitimer l-arbitraire de 'Omar. Elle fait sourire, étant inspirée par les fils des usuriers qoraisites." <sup>81</sup> Caetani lamely remarks that the expulsion of the Najrānians was rather an exception, and not the ordinary rule of procedure, since Jews and Christians elsewhere in the peninsula were not molested. <sup>82</sup> Certainly, a few Jews here, a few Christians there, would not provoke stern measures. But in this case we are not dealing with merely

<sup>79</sup> Should the negative be omitted on account of what follows?

<sup>80</sup> Ṭabari, I, 4. p. 2162.

<sup>81</sup> Lammens, H. *Le Chalifat de Ya'qub 1er*. Beyrouth, 1921, p. 343.

<sup>82</sup> Caetani, *Annales*, IV, p. 352.

a small number of non-Muslims. The Najrānians could muster some forty thousand men.<sup>83</sup> A people so numerous might indeed be considered a menace to Islām, and not the least part of the menace lay in their different faith. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that the prophet, quite apart from any other motive than anxiety the security of Islām, the true faith, should have provided for the safety of the new faith by shrewdly ordering that there should not be two religions in the peninsula.

The Christians of Najrān went to Syria and 'Irāq. The poll tax was remitted to them for twenty-four months. Land sufficient for their sustenance was assigned them in the country in which they took up their abode. The Jews of Najrān, by the way, were expelled along with the Christians. The tax which Muḥammad had laid on the Christians of Najrān was reduced from time to time, as their numbers decreased through death and through apostasies. When the second 'Umar was caliph (717 A.D.), their number had shrunk to one tenth, so the caliph apportioned their tax to their numbers. To Harūn (786 A.D.) they complained bitterly about the oppression they had to endure from the 'āmils. The caliph set their tax at two hundred robes value and ordered that the money should be paid directly to the treasury.<sup>84</sup> Evidently the solicitude of 'Umar about the safety of Islām had worked out very successfully in the case of these Christians.

The covenant which Muḥammad made with the Jews of Khaibar provided, as already mentioned, that the prophet might drive them out any time he saw fit to do so, or, he would let them remain as long as Allah willed.

<sup>83</sup> Wellhausen, *Ibn Sa'd*, p. 67.

<sup>84</sup> Wellhausen, *Ibn Sa'd*, p. 67.

Allah permitted them to remain in Khaibar until 'Umar had assured himself that the prophet had said, "There shall not be two religions in the peninsula." There were several facts that must have made the caliph eager to carry out the wish of the prophet. The Khaibar Jews had persuaded a number of Christian slaves whom their Muslim owner had brought from Syria to till his land to kill their master and had supplied the knife with which they committed the crime. They had also helped the murderers to escape into Syria. It seems that they had also been instrumental in slaying another Muslim.<sup>85</sup> On one occasion 'Abdullah, one of 'Umar's sons, went to Khaibar together with a number of Muslims to make contracts with the Jews about their lands. "That night," relates the son of 'Umar, "I was set upon, while asleep, and my hands were dislocated. In the morning I cried for help. My companions came and asked, who had done this to me. I did not know. They set my hands and brought me to 'Umar, who said, 'This is the work of the Jews.' " Thereupon he resolved to expel the Jews agreeably to the prophet's command.<sup>86</sup> In addition to these reasons Ibn Sa'd mentions the fact that at the time of 'Umar slaves became numerous in the hands of the Muslims.<sup>87</sup> They were put to work in the fields of Khaibar after 'Umar had expelled the Jews and divided their wealth among the Muslims. Now in all this there is nothing to invalidate the truth of the oft repeated statement that the prophet wanted the peninsula for Islām alone. In the case of these Jews it is expressly and repeatedly noted that

<sup>85</sup> Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medina*, pp. 294-5.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn Hishām, p. 781.

<sup>87</sup> Ibn Sa'd, II<sup>1</sup>, 82-3.

they were permitted to remain in Khaibar as long as Allah saw fit. When certain events occurred, the Muslims, looking at the case from their own point of view, resolved that Allah did not want the Jews to remain at Khaibar any longer, that the time had come to put into effect the prophet's order, restricting the Hijāz to the pure worship of Islām alone. The Jews were not sent away empty-handed. 'Umar had their possessions valued and paid them half of the amount estimated. They emigrated to Syria.

Now it is patently true that neither the Christians of Najrān nor the Jews of Khaibar were compelled to accept Islām. However, it is also true that if they had accepted Islām, if they had abandoned their faith, they would not have been expelled. In the quotation adduced above from Tabarī the expectation is plainly expressed that some of the Najrānians may become Muslims, when they learn that they must leave the country. The "religious element" is at work and will not be explained away.

The case of the Banū Taghlib is cited at times as an instance of forced conversions to Islām. Muir says that one of the conditions they were obliged to accept was that they were not to bring up their children in the Christian faith.<sup>88</sup> The adults were permitted to retain their faith, but the next and successive generations would perforce be Muslims. However, this view is erroneous. The Banū Taghlib had sent an embassy to the prophet A.H. 9. The pagans among them accepted Islām, while the Christians agreed to pay jizya for the privilege of keeping their faith. Caetani accepts the statement that they obliged themselves not to rear their children in the Christian faith, yet re-

<sup>88</sup> Muir, *Caliphate*, p. 153.



marks that this condition is obscure, since Muḥammad never forced Islām upon anyone. He suggests that the Christians of the Banū Taghlib offered this condition of their own choice in order to reduce the tax to be paid by them.<sup>89</sup> But this suggestion does not satisfy, because it does not meet the facts in the case. Like many others, the Banū Taghlib regarded their agreement with Muḥammad as an arrangement with him personally, automatically terminating with his death. Accordingly 'Umar had to face the task of dealing with them once more. He wanted them to pay jizya, but they refused to do so, considering the payment of jizya a mark of humiliation. 'Umar's advisers counselled him to yield to their pride, lest the enemy be enriched by them to the disadvantage of Islām, for they were ready to emigrate rather than to submit to the indignity of jizya.<sup>90</sup> 'Umar wisely yielded to his counsellors and to the high spirit of the Banū Taghlib, stipulating that they were to pay a double ṣadaqa, as the tax which the Muslims paid, was called and "that they were not to baptize the children of those of their tribesmen who accepted Islam."<sup>91</sup> It is more than likely that if Muḥammad said anything at all about not baptizing children among the Banū Taghlib, he said precisely what 'Umar said later on. That such a concession should be made, as the one mentioned above, and that such a special regulation, forbidding the baptism of Muslims' children should be added is due to the desire of the Arabs to win this proud tribe over to Islām as well as to the well-founded fear that the Christians among the Banū Taghlib would

<sup>89</sup> Caetani, *Annales*, II<sup>1</sup>, p. 299.

<sup>90</sup> Balādhuri, p. 171.

<sup>91</sup> Ṭabari, I, 5, p. 2482.

make attempts to Christianize the children of Muslims. How well-grounded the fear of the Muslims in this matter was is manifested by the statement of 'Alī. He said that if he had time, he would kill the men of the Banū Taghlib and take their women and children captive, because they had violated their pact by baptizing children.<sup>92</sup> The Banū Taghlib remained Christians, for Barhebraeus tells us that a certain Joseph was their bishop about 700 A.D.<sup>93</sup> The case of the Banū Taghlib cannot, then, be cited as an instance of conversion by force, if for no other reason than that it would be the sole and only instance of the kind in the annals of early Islām.

As already suggested, the reason why the Muslims treated the Banū Taghlib with such special consideration was the desire to have this highly esteemed Arab tribe see the light and embrace Islām. The threat that they would go over into Byzantine territory was in itself not of sufficient strength to compel such consideration. The Banū Iyād undertook to escape from Muslim rule and the payment of jizya by escaping into Byzantine territory. Khālid apprised 'Umar of their flight and 'Umar quickly rose to the emergency. He called upon the Emperor to send the fugitives back without delay. Lest the Emperor take this matter lightly, he threatened to chase all the Christians out of his realm. The Emperor did as 'Umar commanded. The Banū Iyād returned to Mesopotamia, whence they had fled.<sup>94</sup>

From the behavior of the Banū Taghlib and from the

<sup>92</sup> Balādhuri, p. 173.

<sup>93</sup> Barhebraeus. *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*. Louvain, 1872, Vol. I, p. 295.

<sup>94</sup> Tabarī, I, 5. pp. 2507-8.

oft repeated statements of Muslim writers it appears that the payment of *jizya* was regarded as a mark of humiliation. Indeed, this is the view of the Qur'ān itself, as has been shown above. Arnold and others, however, seem to regard it in the light of a special privilege rather than otherwise. "As stated above, the *jizyah* was levied on all able-bodied males, in lieu of the military service they would have been called upon to perform had they been Mussulmans; and it is very noticeable that when any Christian people served in the Muslim army, they were exempted from the payment of this tax."<sup>95</sup> But in the cases to which he refers the motive which prompted the Muslims to exempt Christians rendering military service was not so much the fact that they were rendering military service as the fact that the Muslims were making the best of a bad situation. The following statements of Balādhurī will bear out our contention. After Antioch had been punished by Abu-'Ubaidah for its defection, Ḥabīb, the general of the punitive expedition attacked al-Jarājima, a tribe dwelling in the neighborhood of Antioch. The tribe sued for peace at once and obtained it on the condition that they assist the Muslims, act as spies for them, and function as a frontier garrison for Islām on Mt. al-Lukām. *Jizya* should not be collected from them and they were to keep whatever booty they made in fighting the enemies of Islām.<sup>96</sup> The Muslims wanted to assure themselves against them, for they were a troublesome lot, and their loyalty proved to be very dubious. When 'Abd-al-Malik (685 A.D.) was busily engaged in securing himself in the caliphate, for which Marwān ibn-al-

<sup>95</sup> Arnold, p. 61.

<sup>96</sup> Balādhurī, p. 159.

Ḥakam had designated him, he found it necessary to pay this turbulent tribe one thousand dīnārs per week in order to sever them from their newly adopted allegiance to the Byzantines, who at this time had designs on Mt. Lebanon.<sup>97</sup> The other instance of exemption from jizya in consideration of military service rendered by Christians is of the same kind as the one just mentioned. The Muslims needed these frontier tribes for the safety of Islām. For that reason they remitted the payment of jizya. However, it must also be observed that, when the Muslims were unable to fulfil their part of the usual covenant given to dhimmis, viz., that they give the dhimmis protection, they returned the tax taken from Christians and Jews. When Heraclius was assembling his armies to meet the Muslims at Yarmuk, the Muslims returned the tax they had received from the people of Ḥims, giving as reason that they were too much occupied to protect and defend them.<sup>98</sup>

Looking back over this time of rapid expansion in the early days of Islām we find that the wars undertaken by the Muslims at that time had religious sanction. The objection that it could not be otherwise, since Islām was a theocracy and for that reason could have no sharp lines of demarcation to separate the religious sphere from the realm of civil affairs is, no doubt, true. But, so far from proving the contention that religion had nothing to do with the great conquests of Islām, it seems rather to confirm the assumption that religion had very much to do with them. There must have been scant comfort for Persians, Jews, and Christians in the reflection that the Muslims really did not make war on their religion, when they knew

<sup>97</sup> Balādhurī, p. 160.

<sup>98</sup> Balādhurī, p. 137.

that no attacks would be made on them the moment they foreswore their faith and bowed to Islām. On the other hand, we must not neglect to give due consideration to this other fact that, once the covenant had been written and accepted, the Muslims of these early days were not at all likely to interfere with the dhimmis. They might proceed to live their own life and follow their ancestral faith, as long as they did not rashly exceed the limits defined for them in their pact with the Muslims. There may indeed have been other instances of too great zeal for Islam beside the one mentioned by Ibn Sa'd and referred to by Lammens.<sup>99</sup> The incident referred to was as follows: Under the caliphate of 'Umar the mother of a noble Muslim died at Madīna<sup>100</sup> in the profession of the Christian faith, a cross suspended from her neck. Some Muslims wanted to bury her with the rites of their profession, a procedure that would have been a violation of the security pledged to dhimmis. But in this instance at least such unwarranted zeal was curbed. Her son, a devout Muslim, strenuously opposed such a course with the result that all assembled approved of his stand. He went even further, for he and other Muslims accompanied the Christian funeral cortège. Furthermore, Christians and Jews rejoiced in the triumph of the Muslims over the Byzantines. When the Muslim army reached the valley of the Jordan and Abū 'Ubaidah pitched his tent at Fihl, the Christians of the country informed the Arabs that they preferred them to the Byzantines, although the latter were Christians. The people of Hims closed the gates of their

<sup>99</sup> Lammens, H. *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale*. Beyrouth, Vol. 3, 1908-9, p. 161.

<sup>100</sup> Or Basra.

city against the army of Heraclius, declaring they they preferred Muslim justice and government to Byzantine oppression. The Jews of this city swore by the Thorah to sacrifice their lives in the attempt to keep the Emperor from gaining possession of it. Other cities acted similarly and eloquently declared their abhorrence of Byzantine misrule and their approval of Muslim supremacy. On the defeat of the imperial forces at Yarmuk the cities opened their gates and received the victors with wild demonstrations of joy.<sup>101</sup> Nor were they disappointed in their expectations of greater security under Muslim rule. In the early days of Islām Jews and such Christians as did not accept the imperial theology were better off under the Muslim caliph than under the Christian Emperor.

<sup>101</sup> Balādhuri, p. 137.





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